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THE HISTORY

OF

THE CONFESSIONAL.

BY

JOHN HENRY HOPKINS, D.D.,

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF VERMONT.

"At what doth the doctrine concerning Auricular Confession aim, but that thereby the priests may have a mighty awe on the consciences of all people, may dive into their secrets, may manage their lives as they please?

"And what doth a like necessary particular absolution intend, but to set the priest in a lofty state of authority above the people, as a judge of each man's condition and dispenser of his salvation?"—BARROW, *Treatise on the Pope's Supremacy.*

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THE

HISTORY OF THE CONFESSIONAL.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

We live in an eventful age. A spirit of restless enterprise—restless beyond all precedent—is abroad throughout the world. Not only is it busy in its appropriate spheres—the arts, the sciences, and the commerce of mankind—but in the forms of government, in the plans of education, in the systems of philosophy, in the administration of justice, and in every relation of the social state. No human institution seems now invested with its old stability. Each change is regarded as a preparation for the next. And the law of PROGRESS is invoked to give dignity to the whole work of innovation.

I shall not attempt to analyze the process by which this exciting appetite for novelty has become, to so great an extent, the peculiar characteristic of the nineteenth century. It would be a difficult task to determine how much of it may be fairly ascribed to the craving temper of morbid discontent; how much to a generous and noble longing for improvement; or how much to the mysterious and inscrutable appointment of that Over-ruling and Almighty Power, who holds in His hand the temporal and eternal destinies of men. Neither have I any wish to detract from the claims which many of our ardent reformers may

advance upon the grateful admiration of their disciples. And still less am I disposed to speculate upon the probable consequences of their success. The field is too vast, the interests involved are too multifarious, the ultimate results are too complicated, for my humble faculty of penetration. But I frankly confess my alarm when I see the appetite for novelty invading the province of religious truth. And I would fain contribute my share of effort—though it may be with a feeble hand—to guard the Church of Christ from the perils which surround her.

For unhappily, it can not be denied that the love of change has rapidly extended its influence, of late years, among the professed followers of the Redeemer. Many important and numerous denominations, who had long been supposed established in their respective systems, have been torn asunder by new questions of internal controversy. New sins have been discovered. New terms have been invented. New conditions of communion have been proclaimed. New revelations have been asserted. Transcendentalism, Pantheism, Swedenborgianism, Mormonism, are all at work, with an activity beyond any former example. The conflict of opinion rages over a field which is constantly extending, and the increasing difficulty of ascertaining what ought to be believed, affords a plausible excuse to the infidel for believing nothing.

It would seem, indeed, that the Church, to which it is my highest privilege to belong, might well hope to resist, without any serious effort, this tide of innovation, however we may be bound to grieve, in Christian sympathy, over the troubles and distractions of our brethren. For we profess to abjure all new discoveries in the sacred scheme of redemption. We believe that the Gospel system issued in perfect

beauty from the hand of its divine Author. We acknowledge no power in human intellect to improve the Church, which was established by the apostles. We know that to them and their faithful successors the Almighty Saviour promised His presence and blessing, to the end of the world. And assured as we are, by all the evidence of the Word of God, and by the testimony of the primitive ages, that we have that celestial system in its purest form, we may be justified in thinking ourselves completely guarded against the assaults of novelty.

And yet the spirit of the age, which breeds such craving longing after change in others, has not been without some hurtful influence upon ourselves. The chief difference has been, that as our principles inclined us to the old rather than to the new, we were more liable to err, if at all, in the opposite direction. And hence we have to lament that a few gifted and zealous men, yielding to the prevailing temper of restless discontent, have sought to improve our apostolic plan, by introducing into the Church a modified infusion of Romanism. They looked with secret admiration upon Popery. They saw it lifting its lofty head, hoary with antiquity, boasting its assumed attributes of infallible and unchanging truth, contrasting its seeming consciousness of unity and power with the distracted and conflicting state of the rest of Christendom, and loudly proclaiming that in its fold alone the weary and storm-tost wanderer could find abiding peace. Alas! that they could be so deluded, when they ought to have known that the Church of Rome has gone beyond all the rest in the vice of innovation. True, her sin consists in adding to the divine record, while the sin of others consists in taking away. But the Word of God has pronounced a fearful judg-

ment on both, because both are alike the work of human presumption.

Thanks to the blessing of the Most High upon the strength of our apostolic and conservative system, the dangerous agitation produced by these Romanizing innovators passed away without any serious defection. Firmly resisted by the great body of our clergy and people, and finding themselves unable to make any impression upon the scriptural doctrines of the Church, the chief leaders of the movement were compelled, one by one, to go out from us, and show their true sympathies by uniting with the papal communion. But, notwithstanding the total failure of their main design —notwithstanding the result has only been to confirm our humble confidence and trust in the favor of God toward the system of His own divine appointment, yet their misguided labors, still aided by the same restless spirit of the age, have left behind them a leaven of evil influence. The latest development of this influence has been put forth in the effort to recommend the practice of Auricular Confession; not, indeed, with all the offensive appendages of the Roman scheme, but in a modified shape, under the shelter of a special indulgence, allowed by our venerated Mother-Church of England. To this end, the Rev. Mr. Maskell, late chaplain of the Bishop of Exeter, has published a volume of considerable learning and research. And, as might have been expected, there are some among our own ministry, of small account in number, although deservedly and highly esteemed for their personal worth, who seem strongly inclined to approve his course and follow his example.

The rebuke of this attempt, which has been uttered with more or less distinctness from almost every quarter of the Church, has afforded another gratifying proof

of our substantial concord; and I have no reason to apprehend that this concord is likely to be soon disturbed. But I have thought, notwithstanding, that the occasion called for a thorough examination of the subject, in order that those who wish to investigate the rise and progress of the Confessional might have the whole merits of the question fairly placed before them. For although it is a topic which has often been handled learnedly and well, as in the works of Hooker, Bingham, and many others, and we have been favored, besides, with several able pamphlets of recent publication, yet I am not aware that there is any author in our language who has gone into it as extensively as its importance deserves. In the system of the Roman Church, the Confessional is the right hand of strength. It is in their Confessional that the priesthood wield their vast and secret power over the people. It is by the Confessional that they rivet the chains of superstition upon the conscience and the soul. The total abolition of this fearful despotism was one of the great blessings of the Reformation. And therefore the subject well deserves the serious attention of every intelligent believer, who desires to understand the value of his privileges as a follower of the true doctrine of the apostles, and to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free.

The plan which I have adopted is as follows: First, I shall state at large the Roman system, in the words of the Catechism of Trent. Next, I shall set forth the doctrine of the Church of England and our own, and point out, under fifteen different particulars, the contrast between them. Thirdly, I shall examine the testimony of Scripture, carefully marking the false translations of the Doway version of the Bible, which is the English standard of the Roman clergy. Fourth-

ly, I shall exhibit in their own language the declarations of all the more important fathers. Fifthly, I shall consider the Acts of the Councils, from the first Council of Carthage to the Council of Trent, and the Council of Milan; in connection with which I shall discuss the forms of Confession in use, from the sixth to the thirteenth centuries, and the change in the words of absolution, from the ancient mode of prayer to the novel form of, "I absolve thee." Sixthly, I shall quote largely from the admissions of the most candid of the Roman ecclesiastical historians. And, seventhly, I shall notice the practical proof of experience, to show the total inefficacy of the Roman discipline, and the utter absurdity of placing it in competition with the unerring teaching of the Bible, as a guard of Christian morals, or an incentive to Christian piety. Thus I hope to furnish to my readers what may fairly be considered The History of the Confessional; in which the gradual changes will be marked, and its progress be made manifest to any reasonable and reflecting understanding; and the result, I trust, will demonstrate the comparative novelty and dangerous errors of the Roman scheme, and the truth and scriptural authority of our own really catholic and primitive system.

It may be necessary to add, that I have endeavored throughout to base my arguments—so far as my subject allowed—on the evidence acknowledged by the Romanists themselves, in order that their own witnesses might be compelled to prove their innovations. For this reason I have generally quoted the Scriptures from their own Doway Bible. I have cited the Latin fathers from their own editions, and the Greek fathers and Councils from their own Latin versions; and at the end of the volume I have append-

ed all my authorities in full, each extract being marked with its own number; so that every scholar who may choose to undertake the task, can test for himself the fidelity of my translation.

And now I submit my work to the reader, only warning him beforehand that a patient and attentive perusal will be required on his part, if he would derive from it any serious benefit. May the labor which it has cost me be made useful, by the Divine blessing, to the establishment of truth, and I shall ask no other reward.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROMAN DOCTRINE STATED IN THE CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.

That all men are sinners, by nature and by practice, against the laws of the Almighty, and that the forgiveness of sin is only promised through "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" —that gracious Redeemer "who died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification"—these are propositions about which, among Christians, there can be no dissension. The questions which I am pledged to discuss do not directly impugn these simple elements of divine truth, but turn altogether upon the authority of the clergy to compel sinners to confess their sins in secret to the priest, and to receive from his lips the conveyance of absolution, as well as the positive injunction to perform such acts of penance as he may think fit to appoint by way of satisfaction, in order

that they may have assurance of forgiveness, and be admitted, as worthy partakers, to the communion of the faithful in the Church on earth, and to the society of the blessed in the kingdom of Heaven.

According to the order which I have prescribed, I have to set forth, in the first place, from the Catechism of the Council of Trent, the Roman doctrine upon the whole subject of what they call the Sacrament of Penance. It is a long and ingenious document, and I must bespeak for it a careful perusal.

"As the frailty and weakness of human nature are universally known and felt," saith this celebrated Catechism, "no one can be ignorant of the paramount necessity of the Sacrament of Penance. Its exposition demands an accuracy superior to that of Baptism. Baptism is administered but once, and can not be repeated; Penance may be administered, and becomes necessary, as often as we may have sinned after Baptism, according to the definition of the Fathers of Trent. 'For those who fall into sin after Baptism,' say they, 'the Sacrament of Penance is as necessary to salvation as is Baptism for those who have not been already baptized.' On this subject the words of S. Jerome, which say that Penance is 'a second plank,' are universally known, and highly commended by all who have written on this sacrament. As he who suffers shipwreck has no hope of safety unless, perchance, he seize on some plank from the wreck; so he that suffers the shipwreck of baptismal innocence, unless he cling to the saving plank of Penance, may abandon all hope of salvation."*

"But to enter more immediately on the subject, and to avoid all error to which the ambiguity of the word may give rise, its different meanings are first to

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 234–5.

be explained. By penance some understand satisfaction; while others, who wander far from the doctrine of the Catholic faith, supposing penance to have no reference to the past, define it to be nothing more than newness of life. The pastor, therefore, will teach that the word (pœnitentia) has a variety of meanings. In the first place, it is used to express a change of mind; as when, without taking into account the nature of the object, whether good or bad, what was before pleasing is now become displeasing to us. In this sense the apostle makes use of the word when he applies it to those whose sorrow is according to the world, not according to God, and therefore worketh not salvation, but death. In the second place, it is used to express that sorrow which the sinner conceives for sin, not, however, for the sake of God, but for his own sake. A third meaning is, when we experience interior sorrow of heart, or give exterior indication of such sorrow, not only on account of the sins which we have committed, but also for the sake of God alone whom they offend. To all these sorts of sorrow the word (pœnitentia) properly applies."*

"When the sacred Scriptures say that God repented, the expression is evidently figurative. When we repent of any thing, we are anxious to change it; and thus when God is said to change any thing, the Scriptures, accommodating their language to our ideas, say that He repents. Thus we read that it repented Him that He had made man. And also that it repented Him to have made Saul king. But an important distinction is to be made between these different significations of the word: to repent, in its first meaning, argues imperfection; in its second, the agitation of a disturbed mind; in the third, penance is a

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 235–6.

virtue and a sacrament, the sense in which it is here used."*

"We shall first treat of penance as a virtue, not only because it is the bounden duty of the pastor to form the faithful, with whose instruction he is charged, to the practice of every virtue, but also because the acts which proceed from penance as a virtue, constitute the matter, as it were, of penance as a sacrament; and if ignorant of it in this latter sense, it is impossible not to be ignorant, also, of its efficacy as a sacrament. The faithful, therefore, are first to be admonished and exhorted to labor strenuously to attain this interior penance of the heart, which we call a virtue, and without which exterior penance can avail them very little. This virtue consists in turning to God sincerely and from the heart, and in hating and detesting our past transgressions, with a firm resolution of amendment of life, hoping to obtain pardon through the mercy of God. It is accompanied with a sincere sorrow, which is an agitation and affection of the mind, and is called by many a passion. It must, however, be preceded by faith, for without faith no man can turn to God."†

"That penance is a virtue, may also be inferred from the ends which the penitent proposes to himself. The first is to destroy sin, and efface from the soul its every spot and stain; the second, to make satisfaction to God for the sins which he has committed; and this is an act of justice toward God. Between God and man, it is true, no relation of strict justice can exist, so great is the distance between the Creator and the creature; yet between both there is evidently a sort of justice, such as exists between a fa-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 236.
† Ibid., p. 236–7.

ther and his children, between a master and his servants. The third end is, to reinstate himself in the favor and friendship of God, whom he has offended, and whose hatred he has earned by the turpitude of sin."*

"We must also point out the steps by which we may ascend to this divine virtue. The mercy of God first prevents us and converts our hearts to him; this was the object of the prophet's prayer: 'Convert us, O Lord! and we shall be converted.' Illumined by this celestial light, the soul next tends to God by faith; a salutary fear of God's judgments follows, and the soul, contemplating the punishments that await sin, is recalled from the paths of vice. We are also animated with a hope of obtaining mercy from God, and, cheered by this hope, we resolve on a change of life. Lastly, our hearts are inflamed by charity, and hence we conceive that filial fear which a dutiful, ingenuous child experiences toward a parent. Thus, dreading only to offend the majesty of God in any thing, we entirely abandon the ways of sin. These are, as it were, the steps by which we ascend to this most exalted virtue, a virtue altogether heavenly and divine, to which the sacred Scriptures promise the inheritance of heaven. 'Do penance,' says the Redeemer, 'for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' 'If,' says the Prophet Ezekiel, 'the wicked do penance for all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my commandments, and do judgment and justice, living he shall live, and shall not die.'"†

Thus far there is but little in the doctrine of Rome to which we can have any objection. True, we can not admit of their translation of the terms of Scrip-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 237–8.
† Ibid., p. 238–9.

ture by the phrase of *Doing Penance*. But setting aside this, with a few other exceptions, the portions which I have quoted from the Catechism of the Council of Trent are, in the main, sound and correct. And I next pass on to the other features of their system, in which the errors will be found numerous and of serious consequence.

Having treated of the internal virtue of repentance under the term of penance, the Catechism of Trent proceeds as follows:

"With regard to external penance, the pastor will teach that it is that which constitutes the sacrament of penance: it consists of certain sensible things significant of that which passes interiorly in the soul; and the faithful are to be informed, in the first place, why the Redeemer was pleased to give it a place among the sacraments. His object was, no doubt, to remove, in a great measure, all uncertainty as to the pardon of sin promised by our Lord. Pronouncing upon his own actions, every man has reason to question the accuracy of his own judgment, and hence, at the sincerity of interior penance, the mind must be held in anxious suspense. To calm this our solicitude, the Redeemer instituted the sacrament of penance, in which we cherish a well-grounded hope that our sins are forgiven us by the absolution of the priest, and the faith which we justly have in the efficacy of the sacraments has much influence in tranquilizing the troubled conscience and giving peace to the soul. The voice of the priest, who is legitimately constituted a minister for the remission of sins, is to be heard as that of Christ himself, who said to the lame man, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.'"*

"That penance is a sacrament, the pastor will not

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 239.

find it difficult to establish: baptism is a sacrament because it washes away all, particularly original sin: penance also washes away all sins of thought or deed committed after baptism: on the same principle, therefore, penance is a sacrament. Again, and the argument is conclusive, a sacrament is the sign of a sacred thing, and what is done externally, by the priest and penitent, is a sign of what takes place internally in the soul: the penitent unequivocally expresses, by words and actions, that he has turned away from sin: the priest, too, by words and actions, gives us easily to understand that the mercy of God is exercised in the remission of sin: this is, also, clearly evinced by these words of the Saviour: 'I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: Whatever sins you loose on earth, shall be loosed, also, in heaven.' The absolution of the priest, which is expressed in words, seals, therefore, the remission of sins, which it accomplishes in the soul, and thus is penance invested with all the necessary conditions of a sacrament, and is, therefore, truly a sacrament."*

"That penance is not only to be numbered among the sacraments, but also among the sacraments that may be repeated, the faithful are next to be taught. To Peter, asking if sin may be forgiven seven times, our Lord replies: 'I say, not seven times, but seventy times seven.' "†

"As, then, among the sacraments there is none on which the faithful should be better informed, they are to be taught that it differs from the other sacraments in this: the matter of the other sacraments is some production of nature or art; but the acts of the penitent, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, consti-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 240.
† Ibid., p. 240.

tute, as has been defined by the Council of Trent, the matter, as it were (quasi materia), of the sacrament of penance. They are called parts of penance, because required in the penitent, by divine institution, for the integrity of the sacrament, and the full and entire remission of sin. When the holy Synod says that they are 'the matter, as it were,' it is not because they are not the real matter, but because they are not, like water in baptism and chrism in confirmation, matter that may be applied externally. With regard to the opinion of some, who hold that the sins themselves constitute the matter of this sacrament, if well weighed, it will not be found to differ from what has been already laid down. We say that wood which is consumed by fire is the matter of fire; and sins which are destroyed by penance, may also be called, with propriety, the matter of penance."*

"The form also, because well calculated to excite the faithful to receive with fervent devotion the grace of this sacrament, the pastor will not omit to explain. The words that compose the form are: I ABSOLVE THEE, as may be inferred not only from those words of the Redeemer: 'Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven,' but also from the same doctrine of Jesus Christ, as recorded by the apostles. That this is the perfect form of the sacrament of penance, the very nature of the form of a sacrament proves. The form of a sacrament signifies what the sacrament accomplishes: these words, 'I absolve thee,' signify the accomplishment of absolution from sin through the instrumentality of this sacrament: they therefore constitute its form. Sins are, as it were, the chains by which the soul is fet-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 240–1.

tered, and from the bondage of which it is 'loosed' by the sacrament of penance. This form is not less true when pronounced by the priest over him, who, by means of perfect contrition, has already obtained the pardon of his sins. Perfect contrition, it is true, reconciles the sinner to God, but his justification is not to be ascribed to perfect contrition alone, independently of the desire which it includes of receiving the sacrament of penance. Many prayers accompany the form, not because they are deemed necessary, but in order to remove every obstacle which the unworthiness of the penitent may oppose to the efficacy of the sacrament. Let then the sinner pour out his heart in fervent thanks to God, who has invested the ministers of his Church with such ample powers! Unlike the authority given to the priests of the Old Law, to declare the leper cleansed from his leprosy, the power with which the priests of the New Law are invested is not simply to declare that sins are forgiven, but, as the ministers of God, really to absolve from sin: a power which God himself, the author and source of grace and justification, exercises through their ministry."*

"The rites used in the administration of this sacrament also demand the serious attention of the faithful. Humbled in spirit, the sincere penitent casts himself down at the feet of the priest, to testify, by this his humble demeanor, that he acknowledges the necessity of eradicating pride, the root of all those enormities which he now deplores. In the minister of God, who sits in the tribunal of penance as his legitimate judge, he venerates the power and person of our Lord Jesus Christ; for in the administration of this, as in that of the other sacraments, the priest

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 241–2.

represents the character and discharges the functions of Jesus Christ."*

"To penance belongs, in so special a manner, the efficacy of remitting actual guilt, that without its intervention we can not obtain or even hope for pardon. It is written: 'Unless you do penance, you shall all perish.' These words of our Lord are to be understood of grievous and deadly sins, although, as St. Augustine observes, venial sins also require some penance. 'If,' says he, 'without penance, venial sins could be remitted, the daily penance, performed for them by the Church, would be nugatory.'"†

"To this sacrament it is peculiar that, besides matter and form, which are common to all the sacraments, it has also what are called integral parts of penance, and these integral parts are contrition, confession, and satisfaction. And although, as far as regards the nature of penance, contrition and confession are sufficient for justification, yet, if unaccompanied with satisfaction, something is still wanting to its integrity. Why these are integral parts of penance may be thus explained. We sin against God by thought, word, and deed: when recurring to the power of the keys, we should, therefore, endeavor to appease his wrath, and obtain the pardon of our sins, by the very same means by which we offended his Supreme majesty. In further explanation, we may also add, that penance is, as it were, a compensation for offenses which proceed from the free will of the person offending, and is appointed by the will of God, to whom the offense has been offered. On the part of the penitent, therefore, a willingness to make this compensation is required, and in this willingness chiefly consists contri-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 242.
† Ibid., p. 244.

tion. The penitent must also submit himself to the judgment of the priest, who is the vicegerent of God, to enable him to award a punishment proportioned to his guilt, and hence are clearly understood the nature and necessity of confession and satisfaction."*

"By the Fathers of the Council of Trent, contrition is defined: 'A sorrow and detestation of past sin, with a purpose of sinning no more.'"†

"Other pious exercises, such as alms, fasting, prayer, and the like, in themselves holy and commendable, are sometimes, through human infirmity, rejected by Almighty God, but contrition can never be rejected by him, never prove unacceptable to him: 'A contrite and humble heart, O God,' exclaims the prophet, 'thou wilt not despise.' Nay, more, the same prophet declares that, as soon as we have conceived this contrition in our hearts, our sins are forgiven: 'I said, I will confess my injustice to the Lord, and thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin.' Of this we have a figure in the ten lepers, who, when sent by our Lord to the priests, were cured of their leprosy before they had reached them: to give us to understand that such is the efficacy of true contrition, of which we have spoken above, that through it we obtain from God the immediate pardon of our sins."‡

"We now come to confession, which is another part of penance. The care and exactness which its exposition demands must be at once obvious, if we only reflect that whatever of piety, of holiness, of religion has been preserved to our times in the Church of God, is, in the general opinion of the truly pious, to be ascribed in a great measure, under divine Prov-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 244-5.
† Ibid., p. 245. ‡ Ibid., p. 251.

idence, to the influence of confession. The pastor, therefore, will teach, in the first place, that the institution of confession is most useful and even necessary."*

"Contrition, it is true, blots out sin, but who is ignorant that, to effect this, it must be so intense, so ardent, so vehement, as to bear a proportion to the magnitude of the crimes which it effaces? This is a degree of contrition which few reach; hence, through perfect contrition alone, very few indeed could hope to obtain the pardon of their sins. It therefore became necessary that the Almighty, in his mercy, should afford a less precarious and less difficult means of reconciliation and of salvation; and this he has done, in his admirable wisdom, by giving to his Church the keys of the kingdom of heaven. According to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, a doctrine firmly to be believed and professed by all her children, if the sinner have recourse to the tribunal of penance with a sincere sorrow for his sins, and a firm resolution of avoiding them in future, although he bring not with him that contrition which may be sufficient of itself to obtain the pardon of sin, his sins are forgiven by the minister of religion through the power of the keys. Justly, then, do the holy Fathers proclaim that by the keys of the Church the gate of heaven is thrown open—a truth which the decree of the Council of Florence, declaring that the effect of penance is absolution from sin, renders it imperative on all unhesitatingly to believe."†

"To appreciate the advantages of confession, we should not lose sight of an argument which has the sanction of experience. To those who have led im-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 252.
† Ibid., p. 252–3.

moral lives, nothing is found so useful toward a reformation of morals as sometimes to disclose their secret thoughts, their words, their actions, to a prudent and faithful friend, who can guide them by his advice and assist them by his co-operation. On the same principle must it prove most salutary to those whose minds are agitated by the consciousness of guilt, to make known the diseases and wounds of their souls to the priest, as the vicegerent of Jesus Christ, bound to eternal secrecy by every law, human and divine. In the tribunal of penance they will find immediate remedies, the healing qualities of which will not only remove the present malady, but also prove of such lasting efficacy as to be in future an antidote against the easy approach of the same moral disease."*

"Another advantage, derivable from confession, is too important to be omitted; confession contributes powerfully to the preservation of social order. Abolish sacramental confession, and that moment you deluge society with all sorts of secret crimes—crimes, too, and others of still greater enormity, which men, once that they have been depraved by vicious habits, will not dread to commit in open day. The salutary shame that attends confession restrains licentiousness, bridles desire, and coerces the evil propensities of human nature."†

"Having explained the advantages of confession, the pastor will next unfold its nature and efficacy. Confession, then, is defined 'a sacramental accusation of one's self, made to obtain pardon by virtue of the keys.' We confess our sins with a view to obtain the pardon of them; and in this respect the tribunal of penance differs from other tribunals, which take

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 253.
† Ibid., p. 253–4.

cognizance of capital offenses, and before which a confession of guilt is sometimes made, not to secure acquittal, but to justify the sentence of the law."*

"The pastor will next teach, with all the decision due to a revealed truth—a truth of paramount importance, that this sacrament owes its institution to the singular goodness and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who ordered all things well, and solely with a view to our salvation. After his resurrection he breathed on the assembled apostles, saying, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.' By investing the sacerdotal character with power to retain as well as to remit sins, he thus, it is manifest, constitutes them judges in the causes on which this discretionary power is to be exercised. This he seems to have signified when, having raised Lazarus from the dead, he commanded his apostles to loose him from the bands in which he was bound. This is the interpretation of S. Augustine. Invested, then, as they are by our Lord with power to remit and retain sins, priests are evidently appointed judges of the matter on which they are to pronounce; and as, according to the wise admonition of the Council of Trent, we can not form an accurate judgment on any matter, or award to crime a just proportion of punishment, without having previously examined and made ourselves well acquainted with the cause; hence arises a necessity, on the part of the penitent, of making known to the priest, through the medium of confession, each and every sin. That the different sorts of sacrifices, which were offered by the priests for the expiation of different sorts of sins, seem, beyond all doubt, to have reference to sacramental

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 253.

confession, an examination of the figures of the Old Testament will also evince."*

"As the law of confession was no doubt enacted and established by our Lord himself, it is our duty to ascertain on whom, at what age, and at what period of the year it becomes obligatory. According to the canon of the Council of Lateran, which begins, 'Omnis utriusque sexus,' no person is bound by the law of confession until he has arrived at the use of reason, a time determinable by no fixed number of years. It may, however, be laid down as a general principle that children are bound to go to confession as soon as they are able to discern good from evil, and are capable of malice; for, when arrived at an age to attend to the work of salvation, every one is bound to have recourse to the tribunal of penance, without which the sinner can not hope for salvation. In the same canon the Church has defined the period within which we are bound to discharge the duty of confession: it commands all the faithful to confess their sins at least once a year. If, however, we consult for our eternal interests, we shall certainly not neglect to have recourse to confession as often, at least, as we are in danger of death, or undertake to perform any act incompatible with the state of sin, such as to administer or receive the sacraments."†

"The pastor will on no account omit to inform the faithful that to a good confession integrity is essential. All mortal sins must be revealed to the minister of religion: venial sins, which do not separate us from the grace of God, and into which we frequently fall, although, as the experience of the pious proves, proper and profitable to be confessed, may be omitted

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 255–6.
† Ibid., p. 257.

without sin, and expiated by a variety of other means. Mortal sins, as we have already said, although buried in the darkest secrecy, and also sins of desire only, such as are forbidden by the ninth and tenth commandments, are all and each of them to be made matter of confession. Such secret sins often inflict deeper wounds on the soul than those which are committed openly and publicly. It is, however, a point of doctrine defined by the Council of Trent, and as the holy Fathers testify, the uniform and universal doctrine of the Catholic Church: 'Without the confession of his sin,' says S. Ambrose, 'no man can be justified from his sin.'"*

"With the bare enumeration of our mortal sins, we should not be satisfied; that enumeration we should accompany with the relation of such circumstances as considerably aggravate or extenuate their malice. Some circumstances are such as, of themselves, to constitute mortal guilt; on no account or occasion whatever, therefore, are such circumstances to be omitted."†

"So important is integrity to confession, that if the penitent willfully neglect to accuse himself of some sins which should be confessed, and suppress others, he not only does not obtain the pardon of his sins, but involves himself in deeper guilt."‡

"Prudence and modesty in explaining matters of confession are also much to be commended, and a superfluity of words is to be carefully avoided."

"Secrecy should be strictly observed as well by penitent as priest, and hence, because in such circumstances secrecy must be insecure, no one can, on any account, confess by messenger or letter."§

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 258.
† Ibid., p. 259. ‡ Ibid., p. 259–60. § Ibid., p. 260.

"Besides the power of orders and of jurisdiction, which are of absolute necessity, the minister of this sacrament, holding as he does the place at once of judge and physician, should also be gifted with knowledge and prudence," &c.*

"But as all are anxious that their sins should be buried in eternal secrecy, the faithful are to be admonished that there is no reason whatever to apprehend that what is made known in confession will ever be revealed by any priest, or that by it the penitent can at any time be brought into danger or difficulty. 'Let the priest,' says the great Council of Lateran, 'take especial care neither by word nor sign, nor by any other means whatever, to betray in the least degree the sacred trust confided to him by the sinner.'"†

"The pride of some, who seek by vain excuses to justify or extenuate their offenses, is carefully to be repressed," &c.‡

"Still more pernicious is the conduct of those who, yielding to a foolish bashfulness, can not induce themselves to confess their sins. Such persons are to be encouraged by exhortation, and to be reminded that there is no reason whatever why they should yield to such false delicacy; that to no one can it appear surprising if persons fall into sin, the common malady of the human race, and the natural appendage of human infirmity."§

"We now come to the third part of penance, which is called satisfaction. We shall begin by explaining its nature and efficacy, because the enemies of the Catholic Church have hence taken ample occasion to sow discord and division among Christians. Satisfaction, then, is the full payment of a debt; for when

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 262.
† Ibid., p. 262. ‡ Ibid., p. 263. § Ibid., p. 264.

satisfaction is made, nothing remains to be supplied. Hence, when we speak of reconciliation by grace, to satisfy is the same as to do that which may be sufficient to atone to the angered mind for an injury offered, and thus satisfaction is nothing more than compensation for an injury done to another. Hence theologians make use of the word satisfaction to signify the compensation made by man to God, by doing something in atonement for the sins which he has committed."*

"This sort of satisfaction, embracing as it does many degrees, admits of many acceptations. The first degree of satisfaction, and that which stands pre-eminently above all the rest, is that by which whatever is due by us to God on account of our sins is paid abundantly, although he should deal with us according to the strictest rigor of his justice. This, we say, has appeased God and rendered him propitious to us, and for it we are indebted to Christ alone, who, having paid the price of our sins on the cross, offered to his eternal Father a superabundant satisfaction."†

"There is another sort of satisfaction which is called canonical, and is performed within a certain period of time. Hence, according to the most ancient practice of the Church, when penitents are absolved from their sins, some penance is imposed, the performance of which is commonly called satisfaction."‡

"Any sort of punishment endured for sin, although not imposed by the priest, but spontaneously undertaken by the sinner, is also called by the same name. It belongs not, however, to penance as a sacrament. The satisfaction which constitutes part of the sacra-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 265.
† Ibid., p. 265–6. ‡ Ibid., p. 266.

ment is, as we have already said, that which is imposed by the priest, and which must be accompanied with a deliberate and firm purpose carefully to avoid sin for the future. To satisfy, as some define it, is to pay due honor to God, and this, it is evident, no person can do who is not resolved to avoid sin. To satisfy is also to cut off all occasions of sin, and to close every avenue of the heart against its suggestions. In accordance with this idea of satisfaction, some have considered it a cleansing, which effaces whatever defilement may remain in the soul from the stains of sin, and which exempts us from the temporal chastisements due to sin."*

"In satisfaction, two things are particularly required: the one, that he who satisfies be in a state of grace, the friend of God; works done without faith and charity can not be acceptable to God: the other, that the works performed be such as are of their own nature painful or laborious."†

"The pastor will teach that every species of satisfaction is included under these three heads, prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds. Than these three sorts of satisfaction, nothing can be more effectual in eradicating sin from the soul.‡

"But in this the mercy and goodness of God shine conspicuous, and demand our grateful acknowledgments, that he has granted to our frailty the privilege that one may satisfy for another. This, however, is a privilege which is confined to the satisfactory part of penance alone, and extends not to contrition and confession. No man can be contrite or confess for another, while those who are gifted with divine grace may pay through others what is due to the

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 266–7.
† Ibid., p. 271. ‡ Ibid., p. 271.

divine justice; and thus we may be said in some measure to bear each other's burdens. This, however, is not universally true in reference to all advantages to be derived from works of satisfaction: of these works some are also medicinal, and are so many specific remedies prescribed to the penitent to heal the depraved affections of the heart; a fruit which, it is evident, they alone can derive from them who satisfy for themselves."*

"The confessor, however, will be scrupulously careful, before he absolves the penitent whose confession he has heard, to insist that, if he has been really guilty of having injured his neighbor in property or character, he make reparation for the injury; no person is to be absolved until he has first faithfully promised to repair fully the injury done; and as there are many who, although free to make large promises to comply with their duty in this respect, are yet deliberately determined not to fulfill them, they should be obliged to make restitution; and the words of the apostle are to be strongly and frequently pressed upon their minds: "He that stole, let him now steal no more," &c.†

"But, in imposing penance, the confessor will do nothing arbitrarily; he will be guided solely by justice, prudence, and piety; and in order to follow this rule, and also to impress more deeply on the mind of the penitent the enormity of sin, he will find it expedient to remind him of the severe punishments inflicted by the ancient penitential canons, as they are called, for certain sins. The nature of the sin, therefore, will regulate the extent of the satisfaction; but no satisfaction can be more salutary than to require

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 272–3.
† Ibid., p. 273.

of the penitent to devote, for a certain number of days, a certain portion of time to prayer, not omitting to supplicate the divine mercy in behalf of all mankind, and particularly for those who have departed this life in the Lord. But should it be deemed proper sometimes to visit public crimes with public penance, and should the penitent express great reluctance to submit to its performance, his importunity is not to be readily yielded to: he should be persuaded to embrace with cheerfulness that which is so salutary to himself and to others."*

These extracts from the highest and most unimpeachable authority of the Roman Church, are amply sufficient to show their doctrine in its best and fairest guise. I have quoted them in their own connection, and omitted nothing which seemed to me important to their claims. It is my desire to exhibit the true position of the question, and to do all possible justice to its real character, being perfectly persuaded in my own conscience that no sin can be greater than the conducting of a religious controversy in a spirit of prejudice and insincerity. And if I can not prove that their doctrine, in all its peculiar and distinguishing tenets, involves many great and serious errors, and that it is utterly without support in Scripture and in the records of the primitive Church, I shall be content that my book and its author should submit to condemnation.

My next chapter, according to the course laid down, shall be devoted to the doctrine of the Church of England, so as to show the points of difference between it and the Church of Rome. The ground will then be clear for an appeal to the Scriptures, the fathers, and the records of ecclesiastical history; and the

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 273–4.

whole will be concluded by a statement of the precise position in which our own communion, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, has left this very serious and important matter.

CHAPTER III.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE doctrine of the Church of England on the subject before us must be gathered from her standards of authority, the Homilies, the Liturgy, the Articles, and the Canons. The notions of a few individual writers, who adopted a different system from that of their Church, as it was understood and maintained by the great body of their brethren, deserve no consideration. I shall impute no doctrine to the Roman Church which can not be sustained by the writings which she has sanctioned, and I shall refuse to acknowledge any doctrine as fairly chargeable upon the Church of England, unless it be supported by a similar rule. To this course every candid mind will assent without hesitation.

I commence with the "Homily of Repentance, and of true reconciliation unto God," where the subject is handled with great force and simplicity. But, for brevity's sake, I shall pass over those parts which are of a general nature, and confine myself to such extracts as may serve to show the difference between the Churches.

"Repentance," saith the Homily (2d part), "is a true returning unto God, whereby men, forsaking ut-

terly their idolatry and wickedness, do with a lively faith embrace, love, and worship the true and living God only, and give themselves to all manner of good works, which by God's word they know to be acceptable unto him. Now there be four parts of repentance, which, being set together, may be likened to an easy and short ladder, whereby we may climb from the bottomless pit of perdition that we cast ourselves into by our daily offenses and grievous sins, up into the castle or tower of eternal salvation."

"The first is the contrition of the heart, for we must be earnestly sorry for our sins, and unfeignedly lament and bewail that we have by them so grievously offended our most bounteous and merciful God, who so tenderly loved us, that he gave his only-begotten Son to die a most bitter death, and to shed his dear heart-blood for our redemption and deliverance. And verily this inward sorrow and grief being conceived in the heart for the heinousness of sin, if it be earnest and unfeigned, is as a sacrifice to God, as the holy Prophet David doth testify, saying, *A sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit; a contrite and broken heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise.*"*

"The second is, an unfeigned confession and acknowledging of our sins unto God whom by them we have so grievously offended, that, if he should deal with us according to his justice, we do deserve a thousand hells, if there could be so many. Yet if we will with a sorrowful and contrite heart make an unfeigned confession of them unto God, he will freely and frankly forgive them, and so put all of our wickedness out of remembrance before the sight of his Majesty, that they shall no more be thought upon. Hereunto doth pertain the golden saying of the holy

* Oxford edition of 1802, p. 456.

Prophet David, '*Then I acknowledged my sin unto thee, neither did I hide mine iniquity: I said, I will confess against myself my wickedness unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the ungodliness of my sin.*' These are also the words of John the Evangelist: '*If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to make us clean from all our wickedness.*' Which ought to be understood of the confession that is made unto God. For these are St. Augustine's words: '*That confession which is made unto God is required by God's law, whereof John the Apostle speaketh, saying, If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to make us clean from all our wickedness;*' for without this confession sin is not forgiven. This is then the chiefest and most principal confession that in the Scriptures and Word of God we are bidden to make, and without the which we shall never obtain pardon and forgiveness of our sins. Indeed, besides this, there is another kind of confession, which is needful and necessary."*

"And of the same doth St. James speak after this manner, saying, '*Acknowledge your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be saved.*' And this is commanded both for him that complaineth and for him that heareth, that the one should show his grief to the other. The true meaning of it is, that the faithful ought to acknowledge their offenses, whereby come hatred, rancor, grudge, or malice, having risen or grown among them one to another, that a brotherly reconciliation may be had, without the which nothing that we do can be acceptable unto God, as our Saviour Jesus Christ doth witness himself, saying, '*When thou offerest thine offer-*

* Oxford edition of 1802, p. 457.

ing at the altar, if thou rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thine offering, and go to be reconciled, and when thou art reconciled, come and offer thine offering.' It may also be thus taken, that we ought to confess our weakness and infirmities one to another, to the end that, knowing each other's frailness, we may the more earnestly pray together unto Almighty God, our heavenly Father, that he will vouchsafe to pardon our infirmities, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake, and not to impute them unto us, when he shall render to every man according to his works. And whereas the adversaries go about to wrest this place, for to maintain their auricular confession withal, they are greatly deceived themselves, and do shamefully deceive others; for if this text ought to be understood of auricular confession, then the priests are as much bound to confess themselves unto the lay people as the lay people are bound to confess themselves to them. And if to pray is to absolve, then the laity, by this place, hath as great authority to absolve the priests as the priests have to absolve the laity. And where they do allege this saying of our Saviour Jesus Christ unto the leper, to prove auricular confession to stand on God's word, '*Go thy way, and show thyself unto the priest*,' do they not see that the leper was cleansed from his leprosy before he was by Christ sent unto the priest for to show himself unto him? By the same reason we must be cleansed from our spiritual leprosy; I mean, our sins must be forgiven us before that we come to confession. What need we, then, to tell forth our sins into the ear of the priest, sith they be already taken away? Therefore, holy Ambrose, in his second sermon upon the 119th Psalm, doth say full well, '*Go show thyself unto the priest. Who is the true*

priest but he which is the Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek ?' Whereby this holy father doth understand that both the priesthood and the law being changed, we ought to acknowledge none other priest for deliverance from our sins but our Saviour Jesus Christ, who, being Sovereign Bishop, doth with the sacrifice of his body and blood, offered once forever upon the altar of the cross, most effectually cleanse the spiritual leprosy, and wash away the sins of all those who, with true confession of the same, do flee unto him. It is most evident and plain that this auricular confession hath not his warrant of God's word, else it had not been lawful for Nectarius, bishop of Constantinople, upon a just occasion to have put it down ; for when any thing ordained of God is, by the lewdness of men, abused, the abuse ought to be taken away, and the thing itself suffered to remain. Moreover, these are St. Augustine's words, '*What have I to do with men that they should hear my confession, as though they were able to heal my diseases ? A curious sort of men to know another man's life, and slothful to correct and amend their own. Why do they seek to hear of me what I am, which will not hear of thee what they are? And how can they tell, when they hear by me of myself, whether I tell the truth or not ; sith no mortal man knoweth what is in man, but the spirit of man which is in him?*' Augustine would not have written thus, if auricular confession had been used in his time. Being, therefore, not led with the conscience thereof, let us, with fear and trembling, and with a true contrite heart, use that kind of confession that God doth command in his word ; and then doubtless, as he is faithful and righteous, he will forgive us our sins, and make us clean from all wickedness. I do not say but that if any do

find themselves troubled in conscience, they may repair to their learned curate or pastor, or to some other godly learned man, and show the trouble and doubt of their conscience to them, that they may receive at their hands the comfortable salve of God's word; but it is against the true Christian liberty, that any man should be bound to the numbering of his sins, as it hath been used heretofore in the time of blindness and ignorance."*

"The third part of repentance is faith, whereby we do apprehend and take hold upon the promises of God, touching the free pardon and forgiveness of our sins, which promises are sealed up unto us with the death and blood-shedding of his Son Jesus Christ. Therefore, they that teach repentance without a lively faith in our Saviour Jesus Christ, do teach none other but Judas's repentance, as all the schoolmen do which do only allow these three parts of repentance: the contrition of the heart, the confession of the mouth, and the satisfaction of the work. But all these things we find in Judas's repentance, which, in outward appearance, did far exceed and pass the repentance of Peter. For, first and foremost, we read in the Gospel that Judas was so sorrowful and heavy, yea, that he was filled with such anguish and vexation of mind for that which he had done, that he could not abide to live any longer. Did he not also, before he hanged himself, make an open confession of his fault, when he said, *I have sinned, betraying the innocent blood?* And verily this was a very bold confession, which might have brought him to great trouble; for by it he did lay to the high-priests' and elders' charge the shedding of innocent blood, and that they were most abominable murderers. He did also make a

* Oxford edition of 1802, p. 457–9.

certain kind of satisfaction, when he did cast their money unto them again. No such thing do we read of Peter, although he had committed a very heinous sin, and most grievous offense, in denying of his Master. We find that *he went out and wept bitterly;* whereof Ambrose speaketh in this manner: *Peter was sorry and wept, because he erred as a man. I do not find what he said: I know that he wept. I read of his tears, but not of his satisfaction.* But how chance that the one was received into favor again with God, and the other cast away, but because the one did, by a lively faith in Him whom he had denied, take hold upon the mercy of God, and the other wanted faith, whereby he did despair of the goodness and mercy of God? Therefore, as we said before, they that teach repentance without Christ, and a lively faith in the mercy of God, do only teach Cain's or Judas's repentance."*

"The fourth is, an amendment of life, or a new life, in bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance; for they that do truly repent must be clean altered and changed; they must become new creatures; they must be no more the same that they were before. And therefore thus said John Baptist unto the Pharisees and Sadducees that came unto his baptism: *O generation of vipers, who hath forewarned you to flee from the anger to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance.* Whereby we do learn that if we will have the wrath of God to be pacified, we must in no wise dissemble, but turn unto him again with a true and sound repentance, which may be known and declared by good fruits, as by most sure and infallible signs thereof."†

"They that do from the bottom of their hearts ac-

* Oxford edition of 1802, p. 459–61. † Ibid., p. 461.

knowledge their sins, and are unfeignedly sorry for their offenses, will cast off all hypocrisy, and put on true humility and lowliness of heart. They will not only receive the Physician of the soul, but also with a most fervent desire long for him. They will not only abstain from the sins of their former life, and from all other filthy vices, but also flee, eschew, and abhor all the occasions of them. And as they did before give themselves to uncleanness of life, so will they from henceforth with all diligence give themselves to innocency, pureness of life, and true godliness."*

Such being the doctrine of the Homilies, declared by the 35th Article, to be "a godly and wholesome doctrine," and therefore having the formal sanction of the Church of England, I proceed next to the recognition of the subject of repentance and confession in her Liturgy.

The Morning Prayer opens with an exhortation to repentance and confession; and the General Confession, by minister and people, immediately follows, which is succeeded by a sentence of Absolution in the declaratory form, pronounced by the priest alone, standing. Here it is manifest that the principle laid down in the Homily is the only one apparent. The act of repentance and confession is addressed to God. The Absolution refers to the judgment of God, and the people are solemnly assured that "*He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.*"

The next recurrence of the subject is in the Office for the Celebration of the Eucharist, or Holy Communion. Here there is another humble and deep confession to the Almighty, offered, as before, by priest

* Oxford edition of 1802, p. 461.

and people; and the absolution which follows, delivered by the priest alone, is in the form of prayer. In this likewise, therefore, there is a strict adherence to the principles of the Homily.

But there are two other portions of the English Prayer Book in which the private and specific confession of sins to the priest is mentioned, in connection with an individual application of sacerdotal absolution, borrowed from the Church of Rome; and these will demand a more particular examination.

The first passage occurs in the Exhortation preparatory to the Holy Communion at the close, the words being addressed to the communicants by the minister as follows:

"And because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion but with a full trust in God's mercy and with a quiet conscience, therefore, if there be any of you who by this means can not quiet his own conscience, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly comfort and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

The second example occurs in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, where we have the following rubric:

"*Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession, the Priest shall absolve him, if he humbly and heartily desire it, after this sort:*"

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to

his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offenses; and by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

In these two places, therefore, the Church of England authorizes her priests to receive private confession, and to administer the sentence of absolution in language borrowed from the Church of Rome. Notwithstanding this apparent token of agreement, however, the differences which distinguish the doctrine of the Churches are so numerous and important, that it is totally impossible for any candid reasoner to confound them with each other.

For, 1. The Church of Rome places penance, including auricular confession to the priest, and private sacerdotal absolution, on the list of the sacraments necessary to salvation.

2. She exacts auricular confession and priestly absolution as an indispensable preliminary to the reception of the Eucharist.

3. She excommunicates those who neglect to comply with these requirements at least once in every year, immediately before the festival of Easter.

4. She imposes penance, by way of satisfaction to the justice of God, at the dictation of the priest, in this secret tribunal.

5. She requires secrecy, not only from the priest, but also from the penitent, so that if the priest should err, the penitent has no remedy.

6. She demands a full confession to the priest of *all* mortal sins without exception, without which the penitent not only receives no absolution, but even increases his guilt.

7. She insists upon a disclosure of all mortal sins of the thoughts, although they may never have been formed into word or action.

8. She commands her priests to question the penitent on matters which he has not mentioned, but prefers to conceal.

9. She directs her priests to make their inquisition particularly into subjects connected with what she calls the ninth and tenth commandments (dividing the tenth commandment into two); that is to say, into the special department of carnal desires and thoughts of lasciviousness.

10. She begins her work of the confessional with young children, before they are admitted to the communion.

11. She teaches that sins are forgiven by the priestly act of absolution, without true contrition, requiring what the Council of Trent calls attrition only.

12. She requires the penitent in the act of confession, to "cast himself down at the feet of the priest," as the very representative of the Redeemer.

13. She maintains that the voice of the priest is to be heard as that of Christ himself, who said to the lame man, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee."

14. She requires that the works of satisfaction which the penitent is to perform at the dictation of the priest, should be "painful and laborious;" and in the list of those works of penance she expressly places "prayer and alms-deeds."

15. She teaches not only that the sinner may satisfy divine justice for his own sins, but that satisfaction may be performed by one for another.

Now here I have specified fifteen points of strong distinction, and even contrast, between the Church of

Rome and the Church of England, to show how little can be justly inferred from the *single fact* that the use of private confession and absolution, under certain peculiar circumstances, is allowed, though not enjoined by the latter. And, in order to illustrate the difference more clearly, I shall next briefly exhibit the doctrine of our mother Church on each of these particulars.

1. The Church of England, instead of reckoning penance among the sacraments, expressly denies the Roman doctrine in her 25th Article as well as in her catechism.

2. Instead of requiring auricular confession and private absolution as a necessary prerequisite to the Eucharist, she only demands confession to God, and a prayer for absolution from Him who is the searcher of hearts and can alone know the sincerity of each worshiper's repentance.

3. Instead of excommunicating those who do not submit to auricular confession at least once a year, she leaves it entirely free to each man's discretion.

4. Instead of requiring her priests to impose works of penance by way of satisfaction, she does not authorize them to impose such works at all.

5. Instead of demanding secrecy from the penitent with regard to the transactions of the confessional, by which contrivance the Church of Rome effectually prevents the possibility of correcting the errors and mistakes of her priesthood, the Church of England lays her injunction of secrecy only on the priest, and even this with an important exception. For the following passage from the concluding clause of her 113th canon contains her rule upon this part of the subject:

"Provided always, that if any man confess his se-

cret and hidden sins to the minister, for the unburdening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and aid from him, we do straitly charge and admonish him that he do not at any time reveal or make known to any person whatsoever any crime or offense so committed to his trust and secrecy (except they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called into question for concealing the same), under pain of irregularity."

This is the fair rule of confidence which the universal principles of legal justice recognize and apply, not only to the ministers of religion, but to attorneys, advocates, and physicians; since it is plainly a breach of trust to betray the secret of him who only communicates the fact because he places full reliance on the good faith of his adviser. But there is no propriety whatever in extending such a rule beyond the protection necessary for the party who requires it. Therefore, if the penitent in the Church of England has reason to doubt the soundness of the minister after he has privately consulted him, there is full liberty allowed for recourse to another, or to the bishop; and thus the error of the priest may be discovered and corrected. While the Roman Church, on the contrary, binds the penitent implicitly and absolutely to the dictates of the priest; and whether those dictates be right or wrong, he has no possible appeal.

6. Instead of demanding a full confession to the priest of *all* mortal sins, the Church of England only speaks of such sins as the penitent finds troubling his conscience; and what these are, she leaves entirely to his own self-examination.

7. Instead of insisting upon a full revelation of even sinful thoughts, she speaks only of sins in their usual acceptation, where the inward thought is adopted by the will, or expressed in word or action.

8. Instead of charging the priest to act as an inquisitor into matters which the penitent has no intention to reveal, she only allows him to hear a perfectly free and voluntary confession.

9. Instead of positively directing the priest to make special inquiries into the subjects mentioned in the Tenth Commandment, she authorizes no irreverent culling and choosing of particular topics in the laws of God, and would *avoid*, rather than *order*, the discussion between the clergy and the female members of their flock, of thoughts connected with immodesty and licentiousness.

10. Instead of bringing young children to the private confessional of the priest at an age when they can not be expected to be fully aware of their responsibility, although they may be "able to discern good from evil, and be capable of malice," the Church of England only authorizes it in the case of communicants, and even then she limits it to those who feel their consciences troubled and desire the counsel of their pastors under the burden of special sins.

11. Instead of teaching that sins are pardoned by the priestly act of absolution, without the perfect contrition of the penitent, the Church of England holds the very contrary, on the express warrant of the Word of God.

12. Instead of commanding the penitent to cast himself down at the feet of the priest as the very representative of the Saviour, she remembers the conduct of St. Peter, who, inspired apostle as he was, forbade Cornelius to render him such homage, saying, "Stand up, for I also am a man."

13. Instead of directing the penitent to hear the voice of the confessor, as "if it were the voice of Christ himself," thus investing every priest with vir-

tual infallibility, she teaches that even the Church may not arrogate this attribute of her Divine Head, and ascribes no infallibility to the voice of man, unless it be guided by celestial inspiration.

14. Instead of commanding the priest to enjoin, and the penitent to perform "painful and laborious" works of penance, and expressly reckoning "prayer and alms deeds" among those works of penance, she condemns the idea as unscriptural and absurd, and teaches that prayer and alms deeds should be performed, not as a painful and laborious penance, but as duties and privileges, in which the holiest men experience the purest spiritual enjoyment.

15. Instead of teaching that works of *satisfaction to the justice of God* can be performed by one Christian for another, she repudiates the doctrine as an impiety, dishonorable to the sole office of Christ, and only upheld by the Roman Church on account of its connection with their perilous system of Purgatory.

Thus much may suffice for the present, to show how utterly variant is the allowance of voluntary auricular confession, as retained by the Church of England, with the enforced and compulsory exactions of the Church of Rome, notwithstanding the efforts of some of their writers to persuade the world that they are substantially the same. I am obliged, nevertheless, in candor, to acknowledge my regret that our Mother Church, whose authority I love and venerate, should have appeared to sanction the doctrine of Rome by even the semblance of conformity. Her offspring, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, has wisely omitted every trace of this abuse, and I rejoice that she has done so. But the further elucidation of this discrepancy must be postponed until I have gone over the evidence of the

Scriptures, the fathers, and the Councils, when I hope to make it abundantly manifest that we are completely justified by every proof which deserves the name of divine and apostolical.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

EVERY theologian is familiar with the name and labors of the celebrated Pagnini, born A.D. 1466, a Dominican friar of great attainments in classic and Oriental literature, who spent twenty-five years, under the patronage of Pope Leo X., in translating the Scriptures. His work was adopted and revised by the famous Arias Montanus, a Spanish Benedictine monk, one of the Council of Trent, ranked among the most learned divines of the sixteenth century, and employed, after his return from the Council, in editing the magnificent Polyglot Bible, in eight volumes, called sometimes the *Royal Polyglot*, because it was executed at the cost of Philip II., king of Spain, and sometimes the *Antwerp Polyglot*, from the place where it was printed. From this version of Arias Montanus I shall exhibit, in a tabular form, some of the errors of the Latin Vulgate and the far greater errors of the English Doway Bible, referring also to the original Hebrew and Greek, so that the reader may have the whole truth plainly spread before him. After the meaning of the words of Scripture is ascertained, it will be easier to see the doctrine which they inculcate; and, in order to do justice to the subject, I shall begin with Genesis and end with the Apocalypse.

Original Hebrew.	*Version of Arias Montanus.*	*Latin Vulgate.*	*Douay Version.*	*Version of the Church of England.*
Gen., vi., 6, וַיִּנָּחֶם יְהוָה	Et pœnituit Dominum.	Pœnituit eum.	It repented him.	And it repented the LORD.
Exod., xiii., 17, *id.*	pœniteat populum.	pœniteret eum.	they would repent.	lest the people repent.
Exod., xxxii., 12, *id.*	pœniteat te super malum.	esto placabilis super nequitia.	be appeased upon the wickedness.	repent of this evil.
Exod., xxxii., 14, *id.*	et pœnituit Dominum.	placatusque est Dominus.	And the Lord was appeased.	And the LORD repented.
Num., xxiii., 19, *id.*	ut pœniteat.	ut mutetur.	that he should be changed.	that he should repent.
Deut., xxxii., 36, *id.*	pœnitebit eum.	miserebitur.	will have mercy.	will repent himself.
1 Kings, xv., 11, *id.* (called 1 Sam. in English Bible).	pœnitet me quod constituerim regem Saul.	pœnitet me quod constituerim Saul regem.	It repenteth me that I have made Saul king.	It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king.
1 Kings, xv., 29, *id.*	non ipse homo ad pœnitendum.	neque homo est ut agat pœnitentiam.	he is not a man that he should repent.	he is not a man that he should repent.
1 Kings, xv., 35, *id.*	et pœnituit Dominum.	quoniam Dominum pœnitebat.	because the Lord repented.	And the Lord repented.
Job, xlii., 6, *id.*	Et resipiscam in pulvere et cinere.	Et ago pœnitentiam in favilla et cinere.	I do penance in dust and ashes.	I repent in dust and ashes.
Jer., viii., 6, *id.*	non vir pœnituit super malo suo.	nullus est qui agat pœnitentiam.	there is none that doeth penance for his sins.	no man repented him of his wickedness.
Jer., xxxi., 19, *id.*	pœnituit me.	egi pœnitentiam.	I did penance.	I repented.
Ezek., xviii., 21, יָשׁוּב	Cum aversus fuerit ab omnibus peccatis suis.	si autem egerit pœnitentiam.	If the wicked do penance for all his sins.	If the wicked will turn from all his sins.
Ezek. xviii, 24, *id.*	Et in avertendo se justum a justitia sua.	si autem averterit se justus a justitia sua.	If the just man turn himself away from his justice.	When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness.
Ezek., xviii., 27, *id.*	Et in avertendo se impium ab iniquitate sua.	Et cum averterit se impius ab impietate sua.	And when the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness.	When the wicked man turneth from his wickedness.
Ezek, xviii., 30, *id.*	Converti facite ab omnibus prævaricationibus.	Convertimini, et agite pœnitentiam.	Be converted and do penance.	Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions.

Original Greek.	*Version of Arias Montanus.*	*Latin Vulgate.*	*Douay Version.*	*Version of the Church of England.*
Matt., iii., 2, *μετανοεῖτε.*	pœnitemini.	pœnitentiam agite.	Do penance.	Repent ye.
Matt., iv., 17, *id.*	pœnitemini.	pœnitentiam agite.	Do penance.	Repent.
Matt., ix., 13, *εἰς μετάνοιαν.*	ad pœnitentiam.	The word is not translated at all.	The word is not translated at all.	to repentance.
Matt., xi., 20, *οὐ μετενόησαν.*	non pœnituissent.	non egissent pœnitentiam.	they had not done penance.	they repented not.
Matt., xii., 41, *μετανόησαν.*	quia pœnituerunt.	quia pœnitentiam egerunt.	because they did penance.	because they repented.
Matt., xxi., 32, *μετεμελήθητε.*	pœnituistis.	pœnitentiam habuistis.	did repent.	repented.
Mark, i., 4, *μετανόιας.*	pœnitentiæ.	pœnitentiæ.	of penance.	of repentance.
Mark, i, 15, *μετανοεῖτε.*	pœnitemini.	pœnitemini.	repent.	repent ye.
Mark, ii., 17, *εἰς μετάνοιαν.*	ad pœnitentiam.	The word is not translated at all.	The word is not translated at all.	to repentance.
Mark, vi., 12, *ἵνα μετανοήσωσε.*	ut pœniterent.	ut pœnitentiam agerent.	that they should do penance.	that men should repent.
Luke, xiii., 3, *εαν μη μετανοῆσε.*	si non pœniteamini.	nisi pœnitentiam habueritis.	unless you do penance.	except ye repent.
Luke, xv., 7, *μετανοοῦντι.*	pœnitenti.	peccatore pœnitentiam agente.	one sinner that doth penance.	one sinner that repenteth.
Luke, xvi., 30, *μετανοήσουσιν.*	pœnitebunt.	pœnitentiam agent.	they will do penance.	they will repent.
Luke, xvii., 3, *ἐαν μετανόηση.*	si pœnituerit.	si pœnitentiam egerit.	if he do penance.	if he repent.
Luke, xvii., 4, *μετανοῶ.*	pœniteo.	pœnitet me.	I repent.	I repent.
Acts, ii., 38, *μετανοήσατε.*	pœnitemini.	pœnitentiam agite.	Do penance.	Repent.
Acts, iii., 19, *μετανοήσατε.*	pœnitemini.	pœnitemini.	be penitent.	Repent ye.
Acts, xvii., 30, *μετανοεῖν.*	pœnitere.	pœnitentiam agant.	do penance.	to repent.
Acts, xxvi., 20, *μετανοεῖν.*	pœnitere.	pœnitentiam ageret.	do penance.	repent.
2 Cor., vii., 10, *μετάνοιαν.*	pœnitentiam.	pœnitentiam operatur.	penance.	repentance.
2 Cor., xii., 21, *μὴ μετανοησάντων.*	non pœnitentium.	qui non egerunt pœnitentiam.	who have not done penance.	who have not repented.
2 Tim., ii., 25, *μετάνοιαν.*	pœnitentiam.	pœnitentiam.	repentance.	repentance.
Heb., vi., 1, *μετάνοιας.*	pœnitentiæ.	pœnitentiæ.	of penance.	of repentance.
Heb., xii., 17, *μετάνοιας.*	pœnitentiæ.	pœnitentiæ.	of repentance.	of repentance.
2 Pet., iii., 9, *εἰς μετάνοιαν*	ad pœnitentiam.	ad pœnitentiam.	to penance.	to repentance.
Apoc., ii., 21, *μετανοῆσαι.*	pœnitere.	pœnitere.	repent.	repent.

Now here I have collated forty-two examples, sixteen from the Old Testament, and twenty-six from the New, in proof of my assertion; and no human ingenuity can avoid the conclusion that the English Romanists have shamefully wrested the Word of God in order to gain the semblance of its authority in favor of their doctrine. To understand, however, the full force of this grave accusation, let us consider the strict meaning of the scriptural terms.

1. In the first place, then, I would observe that the word נחם in the Hebrew properly signifies *to change the mind;* and it does not always express a change *accompanied by sorrow*, since in more than a hundred places it is used to signify *consolation*, or a change of mind *from sorrow to joy.* This sense is marked by an alteration in the Masoretic points, but in the Hebrew Testament without points it can only be gathered from the context. A few examples may be specified in proof of the assertion.

Thus, in Gen., xxiv., 67, we read as follows in the Doway version: "And he (Isaac) loved her so well" (Rebeccah), "that it *moderated the sorrow* which was occasioned by his mother's death." The Hebrew words in this passage are וַיִּנָּחֵם יִצְחָק, and Arias Montanus correctly translates them "*consolatus est se Ischac.*"

Again, in Gen., xxxviii., 12, "And when he" (Juda) "had *taken comfort* in his mourning." The Hebrew is, וַיִּנָּחֶם יְהוּדָה, which Montanus translates "*et consolatus est se Jehudah.*"

Again, in Ruth, ii., 13, "I have found grace in thy eyes, my lord, *who hast comforted me.*" The Hebrew is, כִּי נִחַמְתָּנִי, which Montanus translates "*quia consolatus es me.*"

Again, in 2 Kings, or, as we usually call it, 2 Sam-

uel, xiii., 38, "he" (David) "*was comforted* concerning the death of Amnon." The Hebrew is the same word, נִחַם, meaning, according to Montanus, "*consolatus fuerat.*"

Again, in Isaiah, i., 24, "I will *comfort myself* over my adversaries." In the Hebrew, אֶנָּחֵם, and in the Latin of Montanus, "*consolabor de hostibus meis.*"

A long list might be added from any good Hebrew Concordance to show conclusively that the word in itself imports a change of mind. Whether this change be accompanied by sorrow or not, depends on the subject-matter. Therefore our best Hebrew critics say that the term "hath two significations: 1. *Consolari se vel alium.* 2. *Pœnitere, Quæ duo significata conjuncta sunt.* This word signifieth a change of mind, either with respect to purposes, actions, or pursuits, when we dislike them, and turn our thoughts another way, that is, to *repent;* or with respect to sorrow and grief when they are abated, that is, to *comfort.*" With regard to this latter signification, there is no controversy; but with respect to the other, it is worthy of serious attention that the term is applied to the Deity. Now it is quite manifest that the Almighty could not be said to repent in any other sense than that which imports a *change of mind*, or a *change of purpose.* And hence the Latin Vulgate could not translate those passages which referred to the Most High, by its *agere pœnitentiam;* and the Doway Bible, if it had applied to the character of God the phrase of *doing penance*, would have fallen into an error which must have been universally rebuked as not only utterly absurd, but absolutely blasphemous. What right, nevertheless, had their translators to employ *two* forms of expression where the Holy Spirit had chosen to use

one and the same? If the wisdom of the All-wise Creator and Redeemer selected a term which He thought fit to apply both to Himself and to His people, where did the Roman Church find her authority for casting that term aside and substituting another which involves a perfectly distinct rule of ecclesiastical discipline? Manifestly it was the duty of their interpreters to have followed faithfully in the track of inspiration. When they had adopted the words Repent and Repentance as coming nearest to the original, they should have retained them throughout. In employing the other meaning of *Comfort* or *Consolation*, they were justified not only by the vowel points, but by the high respect due to the Septuagint version. But in altering *repentance* into *doing penance*, at their own discretion, without any sanction whatever, they have presented to the world an erroneous commentary instead of a translation.

2. We find, secondly, that the word μετανοέω in the Greek text of the New Testament, likewise imports a change of mind, which is perfectly apparent from its etymology; and this is granted by the authors of the Catechism of Trent. The various senses of the term are set down in this order by lexicographers: "*To understand afterward—to be wise afterward—to change the opinion or mind—to repent—to regret—to reform.*" But nowhere do I find it signifying *To do penance.* So the other term which is occasionally employed instead of it, μεταμέλομαι, is rendered, "*To be sorry for—to regret—to repent.*" To prove the general meaning of these words, it may be as well to refer to a few examples in the New Testament, where they occur entirely unconnected with any religious sorrow on account of sin. Thus, in Matt., xxvii., 3, the traitor Judas is said to

be *μεταμεληθεὶς*, which the Latin Vulgate renders *pœnitentia ductus*, and the Doway Bible "repenting himself." Here, therefore, repentance means a change of mind. True, indeed, it was accompanied by anguish, and the wretched man was conscious of his sin, because he immediately confesses his trangression, saying, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." But it is certain that Judas felt no true religious sorrow, since it was not accompanied by faith, and as it was immediately followed by suicide, it must have been rather the agony of remorse and desperation.

A much plainer instance, however, occurs in the 11th chapter and 29th verse of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where the apostle saith: *Αμεταμέλητα γὰρ τὰ χαρίσματα, καὶ ἡ κλῆσις τοῦ Θεοῦ*, which the Latin Vulgate renders, *Sine pœnitentia enim sunt dona et vocatio Dei*, and the Doway Bible translates, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Here the word repentance conveys only the idea of a change of mind or purpose on the part of the Deity, the same precisely which is intended by the Hebrew term translated *repent*, where the Lord is said to have repented that He had made man, &c. Of course it has no relation to sin, nor to sorrow on account of sin, neither of which could, without blasphemy, be imputed to the Almighty.

A third example appears in 2 Cor., vii., 8, which the Doway version gives as follows: "For although I made you sorrowful by my epistle, I do not repent, and if I did repent, seeing that the same epistle (although but for a time) did make you sorrowful, now I am glad, not because you were made sorrowful, but because you were made sorrowful unto penance." The Greek word for "repent" is *μεταμέλομαι* and for "penance" *μετάνοιαν*. But the Latin Vulgate deals

more fairly by the original: *Quoniam etsi contristavi vos in epistola, non me pœnitet: etsi pœniteret, videns quòd epistola illa (etsi ad horam) vos contristavit; nunc gaudeo, non quia contristati estis, sed quia contristati estis ad pœnitentiam.* I shall not pause now, however, to notice the intrusion of the favorite Roman dogma into the passage. But I have quoted it as another proof of repentance signifying a change of mind unconnected with sin, since it is impossible to suppose that the apostle could have thought he had sinned by writing his first epistle.

One example more may be added, from Heb., xii., 17, where St. Paul, speaking of Esau, saith, *μετανοίας γὰρ τόπον οὐχ ἔυρε.* The Latin Vulgate renders it *non enim invenit pœnitentiæ locum*, and the Doway version correctly translates it, "for he found no place of repentance." Here it is universally understood that the repentance is to be referred, not to Esau, but to his father Isaac, whose mind he sought to change with tears, when he heard that his younger brother Jacob had received the blessing of the first-born. And therefore it furnishes another instance where the word repentance is used, even in the New Testament, in its simple meaning of "a change of mind or purpose."

The primary element, therefore, of the word, consists in this change of the mind, including, when man is its subject, a correspondent change of the heart, or the affections. And hence when used in reference to our fallen race, as the subjects of the Gospel dispensation, it involves, of necessity, a turning from sin to holiness, an abhorrence of iniquity, and a sorrow or contrition on account of it, an humble confession of our transgressions to that merciful God whom we have offended, as well as to such of our fellows as we

may have injured by our sins, and a steadfast resolution to forsake and utterly abandon our wickedness; all connected with faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and in the gracious promises of His love and mercy. The reformation of the life follows, as the appropriate fruits of repentance, and it is the only test by which we can know that our repentance is sincere.

All this applies directly to the Latin word *pœnitentia*; but in no respect can it be said to correspond to the English word *penance*, because this signifies, as every Romanist is perfectly aware, "an infliction, either public or private, suffered as an expression of repentance for sin." This is not only the definition of our lexicographers, and the received meaning of the term among all the writers of our language, but it even enters into the definition of the note on Matt., iii., 2, in their Doway Bible. "Do penance. *Pœnitentiam agite*, μετανοείτε. Which word, according to the use of the Scriptures and the holy fathers, does not only signify repentance and amendment of life, but also punishing past sins by fasting, and such like penitential exercises." In truth, however, such is the confined meaning of the word penance, that it applies only to this last; and this, too, according to the Roman theory, possesses no value, unless it be dictated by the priest, and fulfilled in strict compliance with his directions. And yet we may search the Bible in vain for an example of penance, either ordered by a priest, or performed as a satisfaction to divine justice.

The Doway translators would have had no possible excuse for introducing their favorite penance into a connection with the Bible, if the Latin Vulgate, in common with many of the fathers, had not adopted the ambiguous phrase *agere pœnitentiam*. And yet

this phrase does not, of itself, amount to a shadow of justification. For, as they well know, the verb *ago* often refers to the mind, and the noun *pœnitentiam* answers strictly to our word repentance. Among the meanings of the verb *agere*, we have not only, To drive—to do—to act, &c., but likewise, *To mind or observe—to take care of—to live—to exercise—to endeavor.* And therefore the phrase *Agere pœnitentiam* would have been properly translated *To exercise repentance.* Instead of which, their scholars were so determined to make the Scriptures speak according to the standard of Trent, that *agere* must mean To DO, and *pœnitentia* must mean PENANCE, notwithstanding the fact that in many passages they were forced to abandon their favorite version, and employ the right words, *repentance* and *repent*, in order to avoid a manifest absurdity.

If further proof be required that the true meaning of *pœnitentia* is not penance, any of our English and Latin Lexicons may at once determine the question. Take the following extract from our college standards:

"Penance: 1. *Pœna;* 2. *Supplicium;* 3. *Culpæ expiatio.*

"To oblige one to do penance, *Pœnam reo dicere, imponere, statuere.*

"To do penance for a fault, *Culpam pœnâ luere.*"

Properly considered, therefore, penance corresponds to what the Church of Rome inculcates under the term of *satisfaction.* "According to the most ancient practice of the Church," saith the Catechism of Trent, "when penitents are absolved from their sins, *some penance is imposed*, the performance of which is commonly called SATISFACTION. Any sort of *punishment* endured for sin, although not imposed by the

priest, but spontaneously undertaken by the sinner, is also called by the same name. It belongs not, however, to penance, considered as a sacrament; the satisfaction which constitutes part of the sacrament, as we have already said, is that which is *imposed by the priest*." From this it is easy to divine the motive which induced the translators of the Doway Bible to use their favorite phrase, "do penance," instead of the true meaning of the Greek μετανοέιτε, "repent," or, according to the Latin Vulgate, "exercise repentance;" for the readers of that version can form no other idea of "doing penance" except the performing of the penance directed by the priest, or, at furthest, the voluntary imposition of some painful and laborious work, undertaken as a "punishment" and "satisfaction" for their sins; and thus the Word of God is made to command, in appearance, one of the most dangerous corruptions of their system.

I have next to notice a still more glaring departure from the true meaning of Scripture, in their favorite text, Ezek., xviii., 21, where the Hebrew word is שׁוּב, signifying "to turn away." Here their own faithful interpreters, Pagnini and Montanus, rightly translate the passage, "*Cum aversus fuerit ab omnibus peccatis suis;*" but their Latin Vulgate renders it, "*Si autem egerit pœnitentiam;*" and their Doway Bible makes it still worse by saying, "If the wicked *do penance* for all his sins;" and this is done in the face of two other texts where the Hebrew word is *the very same*, and the authors of the Latin Vulgate are compelled to translate it fairly. The first of these is in Ezek., xviii., 24, "*Si autem averterit se justus a justitia sua*," where the Doway Bible saith, "If the just man *turn himself away* from his justice." The second instance occurs in the 27th verse, where the

Doway Bible, following the Vulgate, correctly renders it, "When the wicked *turneth himself away* from his wickedness." But what apology can be offered to the Christian world for such inconsistency as this? When the *very same word*, which, in two texts of the same chapter, is correctly translated, "to turn away," plainly expressing a change of character, is translated, in the other place, a *doing of penance* for sins!

Now if we take the whole of the texts, which I have collated and arranged in tabular form for the satisfaction of my ministerial brethren, we shall find the following statement to be the sum of the glaring dishonesty of the Roman Doway version:

In the texts taken from the Old Testament, they have translated the Hebrew word נָחַם five times correctly, "*to repent;*" twice, "*to be appeased;*" once, "*to be changed;*" once, "*to have mercy;*" and three times, "TO DO PENANCE." And the other Hebrew word, שׁוּב, they have translated correctly twice, "*to turn away;*" once, "*to be converted;*" and twice, "TO DO PENANCE."

In the texts taken from the New Testament, they have translated the verb μετανοεῖν three times correctly, "*to repent;*" once, "*to be penitent;* and thirteen times, "TO DO PENANCE." The noun μετανόια they have rendered rightly twice, "*repentance;*" twice they have not translated it at all; and four times they have called it "PENANCE." Whether this be a sincere rendering of the Word of God, is a question about which, among unprejudiced men, there can be but one opinion.

Thankful, however, we ought to be that some among their own most eminent divines have done their utmost to purify the Latin Vulgate, and bring it to a nearer conformity with the inspired original. I have quoted

the version of Pagnini and Montanus, in which the true sense of the Hebrew and the Greek is manifest throughout; and it is only necessary for the merest tyro in Latin to compare the translations, in order to be convinced of the discrepancy. What would such men have said if the far worse version of the Doway Bible had been submitted to their judgment?

But the Church of Rome, in the Council of Trent, was not disposed to yield the ground of which the Latin Vulgate had so long held possession. Truth gave way before expediency. The phrase *agere pœnitentiam*, although it was susceptible of a correct sense, as signifying "to exercise repentance," was likewise susceptible of the more convenient sense, which tied repentance to the adjuncts of auricular confession, and works of satisfaction or penance at the dictation of the priest. And therefore, notwithstanding its departure from the original in this and many other respects, which it is beside my present object to particularize, the council, in the wantonness of its authority, established all its errors, and even raised the Apocrypha to the rank of inspiration, in the face of the best and highest evidence of Jewish and Christian antiquity.

It may indeed be said that the Church of Rome has not set the seal of her authority to the Doway Bible; and I willingly grant that this assertion is *formally* correct, but not *substantially*. That large and respectable portion of the Roman prelates and priesthood, who use the English language in their ministrations, have no other English version. The New Testament was translated by their English college at Rheims, A.D. 1582. The Old Testament was added by their college, then established at Douay, A.D. 1609, and the whole, under the name of the Doway Bible, has therefore constituted their only English Vulgate

for more than two centuries. From this they take their texts; from this they quote their biblical proofs in argument; to this they refer their people; and thus it possesses all the sanction in their power. At least, therefore, it holds the highest rank among all Roman Catholics to whom the English is the vernacular tongue; and it is not for any bishop or priest belonging to that extensive and important class to deny its authority.

It may also be said that our own version of the Church of England is far from being immaculate, and that many of our scholars have suggested a number of passages in which it would admit of emendation. This is true, doubtless, and must always be true of any version, since there never has been a translation of any book in any language which could be, in all respects, acknowledged as a perfect substitute for the original. But it is one thing to admit the existence of blemishes incident to the nature of such a work, and quite another thing to allege a *willful deviation* in matters which belong to the *integrity of Christian doctrine*. We may safely defy the world to specify a single error in our English Bible which affects or can possibly affect the interests of religious truth. And it is only because the Doway Bible is fairly chargeable with a systematic corruption, for the obvious purpose of giving a Roman aspect to the teaching of Christ and his apostles in a point of high doctrinal and practical importance, that I hold it to be worthy of such decided reprobation.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTRINE OF SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION TESTED BY THE SCRIPTURES.

HAVING shown the true meaning of the terms of Scripture, I now proceed to the argument in favor of auricular confession and priestly absolution, which the learned and ingenious authors of the Catechism of the Council of Trent have attempted to adduce from the Word of God in favor of their doctrine.

I would first observe, however, that in the whole economy of the Levitical and ceremonial law it is not pretended that any trace can be found of such a system. Throughout the old Testament, the confession of sin is constantly inculcated, and the examples of it among the chosen people are numerous and edifying. But it was invariably confession to God, followed by an acknowledgment to men, whenever they were conscious of having offended or injured them. And as to the pardon of sin, this was well understood to be the sole prerogative of the Almighty. Hence, when our Saviour said to the penitent, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," He was immediately accused of having spoken blasphemy, on the principle so familiar to every Israelite, "Who can forgive sins, except God only?"

That such is still the system of the Jews, is set forth distinctly in the learned Buxtorf's *Synagoga Judaica*,* where he treats of the ceremonies on the great day of the yearly expiation as follows, viz.:

* Chap. xxv. (p. 517, ed. of 1712).

"If any enmity arises among them, they come together, and he who did the injury ought to ask pardon of the injured party, which pardon the injured person ought willingly to grant, for so likewise God will speedily pardon his sins. If, at the first application, he is not willing to forgive, he who seeks forgiveness may take three others with him, and beseech him a second and a third time; if this fails to move him, the other party may take with him ten more, not of necessity, but of abundant diligence, and beseech him again. If the injured party then forgives, it is well. If otherwise, his neighbor, having discharged his duty, is free and safe, and has nothing to fear from his former offense against his fellow, when he hopes for pardon from God. But the other, who refused to pardon, is called *cruel*, and can not expect the remission of his own sins from the Almighty. For it is said: On the day of atonement, the sins with which man has immediately offended God are remitted, according to Levit., xvi., 30: *In the day of atonement that He may cleanse you, ye shall be cleansed from all your sins before God;* that is, *Whatever ye have sinned before God shall be expiated on that day, and ye shall be cleansed from it.* But by no means does this extend to offenses between a man and his neighbor, until the offender has appeased his brother, and is reconciled with him, even if the offense consists in nothing more than irritating language.

"On this day, also, they confess their sins to God, which they call *Viddui*, because this is the day of atonement, the day of the remission and expiation of sins, and they say that it is necessary on this day for every one to make his confession, as we read in the O. T. concerning all the sacrifices which were made for the expiation of sins: *And they shall confess the sins which they have committed*, &c. In like manner as the high-priest also, on the day of atonement, makes confession for himself and for all Israel, as it is said, *He shall make atonement for himself and for his house, and for all Israel:* the meaning of which is, that he shall confess his own sins, and then the sin of Israel.

"The form of confession is very long, and is contained in the books of their prayers. It is expressed in alphabetic order, so that every letter embraces some sin committed more gravely or more frequently; to which, afterward, those who are more devout and contrite, and excel in judgment, add the special sins of which they are conscious, or to which they are more inclined and addicted by nature, asking remission of these at the same time from God.

"If any one reads or recites this form publicly and with a clear voice, he is not obliged to insert in it the special enumeration of his sins; but if he confesses privately, and with a low voice, he does well who numbers all the sins which he is able to remember, because in this way he may be the more stimulated to exercise repentance. Thus they say Moses did when, praying for the Israelites, he said, *I beseech Thee, this people have sinned a great sin, for they have made to themselves gods of gold.*

"This confession should be made standing (to testify greater humility), and with a sincere and perfect heart; and they must often repeat it, at the least ten times on that day."—*Appendix, Note* 1.

Here we see, in the settled practice of the Jewish people, the two species of confession mentioned by the Lord, and specified in our Homily, confession to God, and confession to man, when the Israelite was conscious of having injured another. Once in every year, on the great day of atonement, this confession was to be made *publicly and with a clear voice*, according to the form set down in the Jewish Liturgy; but if the penitent thought fit, he added to this a special confession of his sins, *privately and in a low voice*, being intended for no human ear, but addressed to the Deity alone, in order that the sinner might the better excite his feelings to exercise repentance.

The Romanists, then, giving up the vain hope of proving auricular confession and priestly absolution by the Old Testament, rest them on the promise of our Lord to the Apostle Peter (Matt., xvi., 19): "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." In connection with this, however, they place great reliance on the parallel passage in the Gospel of St. John, xx., 22, where the evangelist relates that our blessed

Redeemer breathed on his Apostles, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Here the Church of Rome holds that the priesthood have a complete warrant for the whole system of compulsory auricular confession and sacramental absolution for the remission of sins. And yet it will require but a moderate degree of attention to perceive that these texts, when fairly interpreted, yield them no support whatever.

For, 1. In reference to the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," all interpreters agree that the kingdom of heaven signifies the Church of Christ on earth, since such is unquestionably the meaning which our Lord gives to the phrase in Matt., xiii., 24, 31, 33. The keys of the kingdom of heaven are, therefore, the keys of the Church in her militant state; and as the use of the key is either to unlock or to fasten the door of the house, therefore it is obvious that the promise had respect to the ministerial power which the Saviour conferred upon St. Peter and his colleagues to proclaim the Gospel of His kingdom; to admit into the Church, by the administration of baptism, those whom they should judge to be penitent and believing; to exclude them, after they were admitted, from the communion of the faithful, if they proved to be unworthy; and to receive them again, when it was apparent that their repentance was sincere. In this plain and obvious sense the power of the keys, as it is called, was a most important faculty, and has continued with the successors of the Apostles to this day, and will so continue until the end of the present dispensation.

2. But an important part of our Lord's promise to St. Peter may be justly applied to the *extraordinary* commission of the Apostles, and therefore it ceased

with them, because it could only be discharged through the gift of inspiration. Thus, in that important text, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven," the reference is to the new arrangements of the Gospel system, in contradistinction from the requisitions of the Mosaic law. This will be apparent, when it is observed that our Lord saith not *whomsoever*, referring to persons, but *whatsoever*, referring to rules and regulations. The power here promised, therefore, consisted in the discontinuance of all those parts of the introductory dispensation which the Holy Spirit should direct the apostles to lay aside, thus "loosing" the bonds of their former obligation; and in the establishment of the new sacraments, the ordinances, the discipline, and the worship of the Church, according to the dictates of the same Spirit of God, thus "binding" the precepts which they should lay down upon the consciences of all believers, on the authority of the divine Redeemer. It was for this part of the apostles' work that they were endowed with the supernatural gifts of tongues, and miracles, and prophecy; for the Almighty has never changed the system of His Church without an open and manifest proof that those who introduced the change possessed His own authority. It was this, too, which made the apostles the ministerial lawgivers of the new, as Moses had been of the old dispensation. But in such an office, from the very nature of the case, they could not have successors, since the Constitution of the Christian Church, once laid down by them in all its essential features, was expressly designed to be the system of all future ages, "even to the end of the world."

I trust that I shall not be misapprehended in the

statement of this important and even necessary distinction, as if I would deprive the Church of all power of future legislation on the one hand, or of the apostolic succession on the other. My meaning, if fairly understood, is perfectly clear of either supposed consequence. The apostles held a double office, one *extraordinary*, in which they could have no successors; the other *ordinary*, in which it was absolutely necessary for the Church, in all ages, to have men invested with the same powers. For the first, they were qualified by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to supersede the previous divine system *in establishing a new one*, the foundation of saving faith being, nevertheless, one and the same. For the second, they were authorized to *administer* the new system, as the chief teachers, the governors, the ordainers, and the judges of the Church of Christ; and here they must have had successors, because the Church is always in the same need of officers to discharge these indispensable functions. And hence it is competent to the Church to make, from time to time, laws and regulations, provided she does not presume to alter or enlarge the rule of faith, or to infringe the supreme law of the Apostolic Constitution, but only legislates in conformity and in reverent subordination to that which is alone infallible, because it is alone divine.

Happy would it have been for the world if the Church of Rome had not lost sight of this fundamental distinction in the doctrine of the apostolic succession. But for her proud contempt of it, she could never have presumed to abrogate the marriage of the clergy; to take away the cup from the laity; to make the Virgin Mary a mediatrix, no less necessary than Christ; to canonize the saints and create

new objects for the prayers of the faithful; to invent a purgatory; to extend the imaginary power of her priesthood beyond the grave; and, among the rest, to devise the yoke of auricular confession and secret sacerdotal absolution for the souls of men. Claiming the prerogatives of inspiration without being inspired —assuming an authority greater than that of the apostles, without a single one of their extraordinary gifts to warrant the assumption—their prelates have incurred a responsibility before God and man, from which those holy men and their faithful and consistent successors would have shrunk with horror and dismay.

But let me return from this digression. The passage from the Gospel of St. John, ch. xx., v. 22, is the only remaining proof on which the ingenious authors of the Catechism of Trent rely for the scriptural warrant of their system. There we read that the Saviour breathed on the apostles, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." I have given this text in the words of the Doway version, although they might have been more strictly translated, "whose sins ye shall *remit*, they are *remitted* unto them." Their own Latin Vulgate renders it thus, "Quorum *remiseritis* peccata, *remittuntur* eis." And this is in precise accordance with the Greek original, Ἄν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας, ἀφίενται ἀυτοῖς. The exact rendering of the verb is of importance here, because it stands in such perfect agreement with the mode in which the apostles executed their high commission.

For this is the great question. We deny not the full import of the solemn words of Christ. That in some manner, by some systematic administration, the

apostles were indeed the appointed instruments of their divine Master to impart to every penitent believer the remission of sins, is beyond all controversy. How, then, did they perform their work? Let the invaluable record of their own course answer the inquiry, and then we shall be sure that we can not err in our conclusion.

But before I refer to the decisive practical proof of apostolic construction, there is another passage which the Roman Catechism does not quote, although it belongs of right to the whole scriptural view of this deeply important subject. It is that sublime end of the Gospel of St. Matthew, where we read that Jesus came and spoke to his apostles, saying, "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

Here, then, we have all the parts of the apostolic commission brought together. And it is impossible to deny that those holy men, being filled with the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost, were thoroughly aware of the nature of their duty, and prepared to discharge it in accordance with its true meaning. Let us look, therefore, to the record. The sacred historian informs us that St. Peter took the lead in the mighty work. He first preached the Gospel of Christ to the assembled multitude, and when they were convicted in their consciences (*compuncti in corde*), "they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, What shall we do, men and brethren? And Peter said unto them, Repent, and *be baptized every one of you in*

the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And "they that received his word were baptized, and there were added to them in that day three thousand souls." The original Greek in this passage exhibits the most accurate correspondence with the language of the Saviour in St. John's Gospel: "*Whose sins you shall remit*," saith Christ, "they are remitted to them." How was this to be done? "Repent, and *be baptized* in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins*" (*εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*), saith the inspired apostle, in the very act of executing his commission. From the verb Ἀφίημι, *to remit*, is derived the noun Ἄφεσις, signifying *remission*, and therefore we have here the direct construction placed upon the promise of the Saviour by the apostles themselves, proving, beyond the reach of cavil, that IN THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM, all such as were sincere, penitent believers DID TRULY RECEIVE, THROUGH THE MERCY AND GRACE OF CHRIST, THE REMISSION OF SINS.

That this blessed privilege stands in connection with baptism, is further proved by the language of St. Paul, Acts, xxii., 16, "Rise up *and be baptized, and* WASH AWAY THY SINS." And again, in Tit., iii., 5, where he saith, "According to his mercy he saved us by the LAVER OF REGENERATION and renovation of the Holy Ghost." And, indeed, the extraordinary importance of the Sacrament of Baptism, in standing thus connected with the remission of sins, might have been anticipated from the express words of the Saviour, where he saith, Mark, xvi., 16, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved;" and in the Gospel of St. John, iii., 5, "Except a man be born of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of God."

In preaching the Gospel, therefore, in receiving those whom they judged to be penitent and believing, and in administering to them the Sacrament of Baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the apostles discharged, thus far, the high commission for which they were appointed. Here was the solemn act by which the sinner openly renounced the pomps and vanity of the world, the sinful desires of the flesh, and the service of Satan; by which he professed his faith in Christ, and promised obedience to His commandments. And hence it was in baptism that his sins were remitted, because he was now made a party to the covenant of grace, admitted to the fellowship of the apostles, to the gifts of the Spirit, to the Church, the body of Christ, and to all its inestimable privileges. When the apostles received the candidate to the blessings of the Gospel, they used the keys in opening the door of the Church —the kingdom of heaven, and, ministerially, "remitted" his sins. When they refused to receive him, because they judged him to be lacking in repentance and faith, they "retained" his sins by declaring that he was unfit to have them washed away. And all that they did or refused to do, in either case, was ratified and confirmed by their divine Master in heaven.

We next learn, from the same record of their acts and their epistles, the subsequent exercise of discipline connected with their commission. They pronounced the sentence of ecclesiastical judgment upon those that proved unfaithful, immoral, or unruly. They suspended the guilty from the communion of the Church; they cast them out as breakers of the covenant, closed the door against them, and thus thrust them back to Satan, whose servants they had been before, and whose service they showed, by their lives, that they did not

choose to abandon. And after all this had been done, if the excluded parties were brought to true repentance, and there was good reason to believe that they were thoroughly converted and reformed, the apostles received them back again to their former privileges, as we read in the case of the incestuous Corinthian. Thus we see the complete administration of the Church of Christ, the kingdom of heaven upon earth, committed to their hands. And for the whole solemn and responsible work they received the Holy Ghost from their divine Master, without whose spiritual influence and aid they must have labored wholly in vain.

Now the Church of Rome does not formally deny any part of this interpretation, and it is manifest that nothing beyond it is necessary for the accomplishment of the promises of Christ. How, then, can they pretend for a moment that those promises can not have been fulfilled, unless auricular confession and private priestly absolution be added to the list of the apostles' functions? Where is the slightest intimation of such a rule in the Acts or the Epistles? And yet their Catechism of Trent declares that "no one can be ignorant of the *paramount necessity* of the Sacrament of Penance," and that "its exposition demands an *accuracy superior to that of baptism*." But if this were true, how can they account for the fact that not one sentence is recorded concerning its administration in all that the inspired teachers of the Church have written? Can they conceive it possible that the Spirit of God would have dictated so much more than what was strictly essential to a saving faith, and yet have omitted this subject of "*paramount necessity?*" Can they really think that "*its exposition demands an accuracy superior to that of baptism*," and yet suppose that the Scriptures of di-

vine truth, which contain so much concerning baptism, would yet omit all mention of another sacrament which required to be expounded with even "superior accuracy?"

But their claim to the authority of the Scriptures is disproved by more than even this conclusive negative testimony. There are two passages which seem to condemn it by a positive contradiction. Thus the Apostle Paul, in his First Epistle to Timothy, chapter v., verse 20, lays down this law for the episcopal office: "Them that sin, *reprove before all*, that the rest also may have fear." Here is a plain rule that sinners should be rebuked *in the presence of their brethren.* And how can such a rule be reconciled with the doctrine of *private* confession and *private* absolution, under strict injunctions *to secrecy?* If their imaginary sacrament of penance had then been in existence, is it not manifest that the apostle would have qualified the precept by saying, "Those who sin *publicly*, reprove before all?" Or that he would at least have alluded to the *private* confessional as an exception to the rule?

The other passage is in the Epistle of St. James, ch. v., v. 16, where we read, "Confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another that you may be healed." And here I can not but admire the boldness of their Doway commentators, who say in a note, "That is, to the priests of the Church, whom, verse 14, he had ordered to be called for and brought in to the sick; moreover, to confess to persons who had no power to forgive sins, would be useless. Hence the precept here means that we must confess to men whom God hath appointed, and who, by their ordination and jurisdiction, have received the power of remitting sins in his name."

Now that this is a most unwarrantable gloss upon the passage, is apparent from the context; for the 14th verse reads as follows: "Is any man sick among you? let him bring in the *elders* of the Church" (not "*priests*," in the Roman sense, for the Greek is πρεσβυτέρους, and their own Latin Vulgate is not *sacerdotes*, but *presbyteros*), "and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins" (*et si peccata fuerit perpetratus*, according to Montanus), "they shall be forgiven him."

It is true, indeed, that the next verse is connected with the subject by an unwarrantable addition in the Vulgate and the Doway version: "Confess, *therefore*, your sins one to another." But this word *therefore* is not in the Greek: Ἐξομολογεῖσθε ἀλλήλοις τὰ παραπτώματα, which Montanus fairly renders *Confitemini alii aliis offensiones.* That it is not, however, a continuation of the 14th verse, but the introduction of a new tobic, is perfectly plain from the change of person and number, as well as from the order of the apostle's statements. Thus the previous verse is in the *third* person and the *singular* number. "Is any man sick? let *him*," &c. The next verse is in the *second* person and in the *plural:* "Confess *your* sins one to another," &c. The order of the subject proves the same thing; for it is manifest that if the apostle had intended to inculcate the notion which the Doway commentators have so audaciously put in his mouth, he never could have stated that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him," without attending to the confession and the absolution which, according to their system,

must have *preceded* the forgiveness of sin. The omission of confession to the priest, in the order to which it belongs in their theology, is the more striking, from the fact that the subject of confession is introduced immediately afterward under a totally different aspect: "Confess your sins one to another;" since this proves conclusively that it was not *forgotten* by the apostle when he wrote the previous verse, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost he was led to record it in such a form as is absolutely fatal to their doctrine.

For now, when the case of the sick believer is brought to a full conclusion, St. James inculcates confession to man in the direct terms which exclude their sacramental theory altogether. "Confess your sins," not to the priest, but "to *one another*, and pray for one another, that you may be healed, for the continual prayer of a righteous man availeth much." And then the apostle proceeds to illustrate the efficacy, not of priestly absolution, but of prayer, by referring to the condescension of God in connecting His wondrous works with the prayers of Elias. It is impossible to conceive of a more decisive proof than this, that their whole peculiar doctrine is utterly at variance with the teaching of the apostles.

I would next observe to what strange extravagance these commentators are ready to have recourse when they are determined to foist their favorite dogmas on the Bible; for they are not ashamed to say, in the note which I have quoted, "Moreover, to confess to persons who had no power to forgive sins, would be useless;" and this they tell us in the very face of St. James's declaration, that "the *prayer* of a righteous man *availeth much*." Not only, however, do they here oppose the apostle, but expressly contradict several other passages of Scripture. Thus, in

Matt., ch. v., v. 23, we read the precept of Christ, "Therefore, if thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there shalt remember that thy brother hath any thing against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and first go to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Again, Luke, xvii., 4, the same divine Teacher saith, "If thy brother sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, forgive him." And yet again, Col., iii., 12–13, the apostle saith, "Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience; bearing with one another, and *forgiving one another*, if any have a complaint against another; even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do ye also." All these passages are in the plainest accordance with the precept of St. James, "Confess your sins one to another;" and yet, in determined opposition to them all, their champions do not blush to say that the *confession of sins to persons who have no priestly power to forgive sins would be useless!*

Thus, then, stands their scriptural argument for auricular confession and secret absolution, in what they call the Sacrament of Penance. Not only is it without the slightest real support, but it is even in conflict with positive and circumstantial evidence. They might, perhaps, make out a plausible case if their Church could condescend to adopt Mr. Newman's theory of Development, because their system was certainly developed after some centuries, out of what elements we shall see in due time. But, unfortunately for their cause, they would in that case stand convicted of error in having claimed for all their doctrines an apostolic origin, and I fear that they are not yet ready to give up their figment of infallibility for the sake of an accordance with scriptural truth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DOCTRINE OF SATISFACTION TESTED BY SCRIPTURE.

THE remaining branch of the papal system which belongs to their sacrament of penance is the doctrine of Satisfaction, and as their Catechism of the Council of Trent appeals to the authority of Scripture on this point with great apparent confidence, it is necessary to examine the argument with serious attention.

"Satisfaction," saith the Roman Church, in the words of their Catechism, "is the full payment of a debt; for, when satisfaction is made, nothing remains to be supplied; hence, when we speak of reconciliation by grace, to satisfy is the same as to do that which may be sufficient to atone to the angered mind for an injury offered, and thus satisfaction is nothing more than 'compensation for an injury done to another.' Hence theologians make use of the word 'satisfaction' to signify *the compensation made by man to God, by doing something in atonement for the sins which he has committed.*"

Now here is a doctrine which we can not too strongly condemn as utterly hostile to the whole testimony of the Scriptures. Man can do nothing in atonement for his sins before the Almighty; and hence our entire dependence for atonement must rest upon the sacrifice of our blessed Saviour. And this is equally true of all, without exception; for the best men during the present life are encompassed with infirmity. Even the Apostle Paul confesses the imperfection of

his attainments, Philip., iii., 12–14: "Not as though I had already attained," saith he, "either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." St. James, in like manner, ch. iii., v. 2, saith, "In many things we all offend." And St. John, 1 Ep., i., 8, saith, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." If, then, the best obedience of the holiest saints is still imperfect, how is it possible that they can satisfy or atone to God for their former sins? For what can they render to God beyond the present demands of duty? And if their highest efforts are still defective, so that they can only be accepted through the merits of Christ, how can they have a superfluity of obedience to set down as an offset to their past transgressions, "in compensation," as the Roman Catechism calls it, to the justice of the Almighty? Hence our Lord expressly declares, Luke, xvii., 10, "So you also, when you shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do."

The Catechism of Trent, however, tries to evade this difficulty by setting forth three, or, rather, four kinds of satisfaction, and giving the first place to the atonement of Christ, which "stands pre-eminently above all the rest, as that by which, whatever is due by us to God on account of our sins, is paid abundantly, although he should deal with us according to the strictest rigor of his justice. This, we say, has

appeased God, and rendered him propitious to us, and for it we are indebted to Christ alone, who, having paid the price of our sins upon the cross, offered to his Eternal Father a superabundant satisfaction."

Here I am glad to acknowledge that their doctrine is in perfect accordance with the Word of God; but the statement of this great truth does not remove the impiety of the notion that the penitent himself can "satisfy" or make "compensation" to divine justice. The debt paid by Christ can not be paid by the sinner also. And therefore the apostle saith, Eph., ii., 8, "By grace you are saved through faith, and this *not of yourselves;* for it is the GIFT OF GOD. *Not of works, that no man may glory.*"

"There is another sort of satisfaction," continues the papal Catechism, "which is called canonical, and is performed within a certain fixed period of time. Hence, according to the most ancient practice of the Church, when penitents are absolved from their sins, some penance is imposed, the performance of which is commonly called satisfaction."

This passage shows the historical origin of the term from which, by a gradual and deplorable distortion, the Church of Rome concocted, after the lapse of many centuries, their modern doctrine. The primitive Church began, in the fourth century, to establish certain canons of penitential discipline, which I shall quote in a subsequent chapter, by which gross sinners were put away from the Communion for various periods, in some cases for ten years and more; and it is true, that after the period of public penitence allotted to the culprit was fulfilled, if his conduct was irreproachable, and his reformation was deemed sincere, he was considered as having given "satisfaction;" but this satisfaction was *to the Church*, and

not to the Almighty; and therefore it was rightly called "Canonical," because it was in pursuance of the canons. And hence it afforded no ground whatever for their modern theory, with which it had not a single element in common. For in those days the confession of sin was *open*, not secret. The penitence enjoined was *regulated by the Canons*, and not by the private dictation of the priest. The fulfillment of that penitence was *public*, not concealed and capable of evasion. The sinner was obliged to satisfy the Church that he was *truly reformed first*, and he was admitted to the Communion afterward; whereas now their doctrine is, that he is to be privately absolved, and admitted to the Communion immediately; that his penance is to be performed afterward; and that the fact of his becoming reformed at all, being only a future contingency, shall not be taken into the account at the time of his absolution. Lastly, the words of absolution were then in the form of prayer, delivered in the face of the congregation, while now it is the positive "I absolve thee," uttered in the secret confessional. All these points will be proved by quotations from their own undeniable authorities; and I only mention them at present, in order to show that in nothing but the mere word "satisfaction" have they retained any portion of the primitive system.

"Any sort of punishment endured for sin," continues the Trentine Catechism, "although not imposed by the priest, but spontaneously undertaken by the sinner, is also called by the same name" (satisfaction). "It belongs not, however, to penance as a sacrament: the satisfaction which constitutes part of the sacrament is that which is imposed by the priest." This, therefore, is the special subject which the Church of Rome insists on as the adjunct to her au-

ricular confession and sacerdotal absolution; and I may safely challenge the ingenuity of her whole hierarchy to find a single instance of any such penance, from Genesis to Revelation.

They refer, indeed, in their celebrated Catechism, to a number of examples in which sin was punished, according to their hypothesis, by temporal sufferings, notwithstanding it was forgiven. And this punishment they assume to have been inflicted in order to satisfy the justice of the Almighty. But such a view of the matter is totally erroneous, not only unsupported by the statements of Scripture, but at war with the first maxims of universal equity; for what should we think of an earthly governor who, after fully pardoning an offense, should proceed to punish the offender? And how can they imagine that the government of God is guided by a principle which is open to the charge of such glaring inconsistency?

The temporal consequences of sin, therefore, in the case of the faithful, which they call a *punishment inflicted to satisfy the justice of God*, are rather to be considered as a fatherly and corrective discipline, inflicted not as a *punishment* to *satisfy*, but as a *remedy to cure*. "Those whom I love," saith the Lord, Apoc., ch. iii., 19, "I rebuke and chastise; be zealous, therefore, and repent." "You have forgotten," saith St. Paul to the Hebrews, ch. xii., v. 5–10, "the consolation which speaketh to you as unto children, saying, My son, neglect not the discipline of the Lord, neither be thou wearied whilst thou art rebuked by him. For whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth, and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Persevere under chastisement. God offereth himself to you as to sons: for what son is he whom the father doth not correct? But if you be

without chastisement, whereof all are made partakers, then are you bastards and not sons. Moreover, we have had, indeed, for our instructors, the fathers of our flesh, and we reverenced them; shall we not much more obey the Father of spirits, and live? And they, indeed, for a few days chastised us according to their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

Here, then, is the beautiful theory of the Word of God, placing the whole of His afflictive discipline in the present life on the ground of a fatherly chastisement to correct and sanctify His erring children. How totally opposite to the Roman system, which considers it as a punishment by way of satisfaction to His justice!—"a compensation," in the language of their Catechism, "made by man to God, in atonement for the sins which he has committed."

Let us look, for example, at the case of Job. He led a life of apparently consistent holiness. His words and his conduct seem to have been perfectly pure and above reproach. Why did the Almighty commission Satan to put this holy man to such severe and protracted trials? Because His all-seeing eye read the patriarch's heart, and there beheld the destructive sin of spiritual pride or self-righteousness, which Job himself knew not, but which was, nevertheless, increasing day by day. In love and in mercy, therefore, the Lord chastised His servant, in order to teach him to understand his secret sin and reduce his soul to the temper of true faith, which can only exist in conjunction with humility. For a considerable period the patriarch bears his sufferings with apparent submission, but when his three friends begin to upbraid him, supposing, as the Church of Rome would say, that temporal afflictions could only be intended as a

punishment for sin, he betrays the true state of his heart, breaks out into open complaint and murmurs, accuses God of being cruel to him, justifies himself, and can see no reason whatever for his appointed wretchedness. At length, however, the merciful designs of the Lord are accomplished; Job is humbled before the majesty of the Most High; his pride is cast down, and he confesses his unworthiness in the language of true contrition, "I have uttered that I understood not," saith he, "things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." And what was the result? the Almighty approved the change of his servant's heart, and rebuked his three friends because they had misrepresented the divine character. Job was immediately released from his chastisement, since the gracious object of his sufferings had been attained, "and the Lord blessed his latter end more than his beginning."

Now, on the Roman theory, what can be made of an example like this? The patriarch had committed no outward sin anterior to his dreadful afflictions, and what could any of their priests have prescribed for the secret sin of the heart, of which even the transgressor himself was perfectly unconscious? The language of our Lord and of St. Paul, however, already quoted, explains the whole. God saw the danger of His servant, and administered His corrective discipline; He chastened the patriarch as a kind father chastens the son in whom he delighteth, not as a *punishment to satisfy His own divine justice*, but as the only effectual remedy for a deep-seated, mortal, yet unsuspected disease of the soul. Thus it is that the Almighty shows himself in His true character toward

His adopted children, and their bitter affliction is so far from being the sentence of a stern Judge, that it is in reality the healing medicine of a tender and compassionate Physician.

The favorite example of the Roman theologians, however, is the case of David, in which they contrive to distort the sacred history from its proper aspect, and present it in a guise which can only be admired as a specimen of strangely-perverted ingenuity. I shall quote the argument in its own connection, for it is worthy of serious attention as a striking proof of the power which a false theory can exercise in misinterpreting the Word of God.

"The faithful are to be taught," saith the papal Catechism, p. 267, "that sin carries in its train two evils, the stain which it affixes, and the punishment which it entails. The punishment of eternal death, it is true, is forgiven with the sin to which it was due, yet, as the Council of Trent declares, the stain is not always entirely effaced, nor is the temporal punishment always remitted. Of this the Scriptures afford many evident examples; that of David, however, is the most conspicuous and illustrious. Already had Nathan announced to him, 'The Lord also hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die;' yet the royal penitent voluntarily subjected himself to the most severe penance, imploring night and day the mercy of God in these words: 'Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me.' Thus did he beseech God to pardon not only the crime, but also the punishment due to it, and to restore him, cleansed from the stains of sin, to his former state of purity and integrity. This is the object of his most earnest supplications to the throne of God, and yet the Al-

mighty punishes his transgression with the death of his adulterous offspring, the rebellion and death of his beloved son Absalom, and with the other heavy chastisements with which his vengeance had already threatened him."

Now here, with much plausibility, the Church of Rome endeavors to make the sacred history bear testimony in her favor, whereas, in truth, the evidence is all against her. For surely it is perfectly manifest that the Lord proposed two objects to be accomplished in the chastisement of the highly favored David. The one respected the sinner himself; the other respected the solemn lesson required for the whole nation of Israel. The Prophet Nathan delivered the divine decree in these words: "Thou hast killed Urias the Hethite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Urias the Hethite to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord: Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thy eyes and give them to thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing in the sight of all Israel, and in the sight of the sun. And David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said to David, The Lord also hath taken away thy sin: thou shalt not die. Nevertheless, because thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme for this thing, the child that is born to thee shall surely die."

From this it is evident that the iniquity of David had produced, as might indeed be naturally expected,

a most extensive and injurious effect on the religion and morals of the whole nation; for not only was he a *monarch*, whose eminent dignity would of itself be sure to give his example a great influence over his subjects, either for good or evil, but he was a *popular* monarch, the favorite of Israel on account of his victory over Goliath, and his numerous conquests of all their other enemies. Moreover, he was the inspired author of many of the Psalms, and eminent for his devotion to the God of Israel. When such a man fell from his lofty and distinguished pre-eminence to be a vile adulterer, and even to murder one of his most faithful captains for the sake of possessing his wife, it is manifest that it must have inflicted a dreadful wound upon the faith and feelings of the kingdom. For sins of a much lighter dye in popular estimation, Saul had been cut off and his offspring disinherited. Nor was it in this alone that the course of David was of an evil tendency; for it is perfectly manifest that he had fallen into the too common error of allowing his children to grow up in habits of vicious self-indulgence. Absalom, Amnon, and Adonijah are striking examples of the worst depravity. And it is easy to see how awfully corrupt the whole nation was likely to become with such models before them, when the monarch who stood so high, as the inspired psalmist and the zealous worshiper of God, not only suffered his sons to run riot in iniquity without any restraint, but even sanctioned, in his own person, the awful crimes of adultery and murder. All this must, indeed, have given great occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme, as the Prophet Nathan declared; because there is no blasphemy greater than that which proclaims an alliance between the public profession of religious zeal and the habits of the vilest personal

profligacy; and hence it became absolutely necessary, for the vindication of the divine law and the divine character, as well as for the safety of the morals of the whole nation, that the displeasure of God should be made manifest, first, on the monarch himself, by slaying the offspring of his sin, and letting loose the wicked ambition of his sons against him; secondly, on his flagitious children; and, thirdly, on the Israelites, who had become already so depraved that they were prepared to encourage the rebellion of the son against the father, and applaud even the shameful incest advised by Ahitophel, and perpetrated by Absalom in the open day, and in the sight of the people.

It seems marvelous, to any sober and unprejudiced mind, how a case of corrective discipline like this could ever be quoted in support of the Romish doctrine. Their Catechism declares, indeed, that "the royal penitent voluntarily subjected himself to the most severe penance." But how does it appear that it was a penance? They confess that it availed nothing. The threatened chastisement came as it was appointed. How, then, can they possibly imagine that it was regarded as a penance or a satisfaction at all? Is it not obvious that the Almighty, when He saw the compunction of the monarch's heart, and commanded the prophet to say, "The Lord hath taken away thy sin," must have conveyed to him a free and full forgiveness? And yet, notwithstanding this, David needed a long course of suffering and humiliation, to make him realize the dreadful nature of his transgressions, to cure him of all his pride and self-confidence, and to sanctify his soul by a deeper repentance, a more absolute faith, and a holier obedience. His trials, therefore, were not, as they say, a *punishment* inflicted on him *in satisfaction to the*

justice of God; but a merciful chastisement, administered as a wholesome and necessary discipline, to enlighten, to purify, and to reform. The first would have been the act of a vindictive Judge. The second was the act of a kind and watchful Father. And hence the record of the sacred history utterly forbids their construction, because no just judge could first pardon a crime, and then proceed to inflict a *satisfactory punishment.* Surely, then, it is manifest that David's sufferings were not a judicial penalty, but a parental correction, and his bitter tears of humiliation were not, as the Roman theory supposes, a *self-imposed penance*, designed to propitiate the *justice* of the Deity, but the genuine product of a heart dissolved in sorrow for the sins which had made so heavy a chastisement necessary, and shed not only for himself, but for his family and his people.

The next point which the Roman Catechism lays down is worthy of attention. "In satisfaction two things are particularly required: the one, that he who satisfies be in a state of grace, the friend of God: works done without faith and charity can not be acceptable; the other, that the works performed be such as are *of their own nature painful or laborious.*" And then, a little after, we read as follows: "The pastor will teach that every species of satisfaction is included under these three heads—*prayer*, *fasting*, *and alms-deeds.*"

I find no reference to Scripture for these propositions, and truly it would be a hopeless effort for the ingenuity even of the Council of Trent to reconcile them to the Word of God. It is surely not to be believed that the will of our heavenly Father proposes any thing belonging to His service as being "*in its own nature painful or laborious.*" To our fallen and

corrupt nature, indeed, prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds may too often be irksome, disagreeable, and burdensome. But *in themselves*, and to those who are in "a state of grace, the friends of God," and capable of realizing "true faith and charity," prayer is the highest privilege, alms-deeds the purest pleasure, and fasting, so far as it is enjoined by divine authority, is an acceptable discipline of the flesh, and the handmaid to devotion. To my mind it seems nothing better than a libel upon Christianity to call its duties "*of their own nature painful or laborious*." On the contrary, the great Redeemer tells us that His yoke is easy, His burden light, His service the only perfect freedom. It is the constant principle of the Bible that the way of transgressors is hard, that the ways of heavenly wisdom are pleasantness and peace, and that holiness and happiness belong together.

But now I come to a yet more unscriptural doctrine, and one that is a special favorite with the Church of Rome for many reasons of policy. "In this," saith their Catechism, "the mercy and goodness of God shine conspicuous, and demand our grateful acknowledgments, that he has granted to our frailty the privilege that *one may satisfy for another*. This, however, is a privilege which is confined to the satisfactory part of penance alone, and extends not to contrition and confession: no man can be contrite or confess for another, while those who are gifted with divine grace may *pay through others what is due to the divine justice*, and thus we may be said, in some measure, to bear each other's burdens. This is a doctrine on which the faithful can not for a moment entertain a doubt, professing, as we do, in the Apostle's Creed, our belief in the communion of saints. Regenerated, as we all are, to Christ, in the same cleans-

ing waters of baptism, partakers of the same sacraments, and, above all, of the same heavenly food, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are all, it is manifest, members of the same mystical body. As, then, the foot does not perform its functions solely for itself, but also for the sake of the other members, and as the other members perform their respective functions not only for their own, but also for the common good, so works of satisfaction are common to all the members of the Church."*

Here, too, there is no attempt to quote the Scriptures, any further than the reference made to the apostle's doctrine, that we are every one members of each other. But the conclusion drawn from this fact is in the face of the Bible, and of the very analogy from which it is pretended to be derived. The power of satisfying the justice of God for others is the sole prerogative of Christ, and we hold it to be a most perilous absurdity to extend it to the saints on their imaginary ground of works of supererogation. As to the members of the natural body, it is preposterous to regard them in the light of substitutes for each other, in any sense which will suit the Roman doctrine. Can the wounded hand be restored by the efforts of the feet? Can the diseased eye be healed by the activity of the ear? Can the increased action of the heart relieve the decaying lungs? True, indeed, it is that the connection between the several members obliges them to sympathize with each other, in pain and in joy; and it is here that the apostle places the analogy. But to extend this to the idea that one member can restore the health or discharge the proper functions of another, is pure imagination.

And quite as imaginary is the notion that the

* Catechism of the Council of Trent, first Am. ed., p. 272.

Communion of Saints applies the works of Satisfaction—prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds—done by one man, to the reconciling another man to the justice of God. True, we are bound by that communion to the feelings and actions of religious sympathy—to weep with those that weep, to rejoice with those that rejoice, to pray for one another, to supply each other's wants, and to bear each other's burdens. And the sick man is enjoined to send for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, with the promise that the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. But all this is far short of the "*paying through others what is due to the divine justice*," for which we can look to none but Christ alone. No Christian can have more faith, more penitence, more charity, more zeal, or more good works than he needs for the account of his own stewardship. When he has done all that he can, he is bound to confess himself an unprofitable servant. Where, then, is the superfluity which can be placed to the account of his brother? And where is the authority to any man for relying on such superfluity being applied to his account, even if it were possible that it could exist? The whole proposition, therefore, is a dangerous delusion; the tendency of which is to withdraw the heart from a single trust in Christ, and put a vain confidence in the supposed merits of the Saints: notwithstanding the Scripture saith, "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps. xlix., 7). "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil., ii., 12). "For every one shall bear his own burden" (Gal., vi., 5).

It is not my object to pursue this prolific fountain of error into its connection with the Roman doctrine of purgatory and indulgences. But leaving at this point the attempt of their writers to justify their system of auricular confession, absolution, and satisfaction by the Scriptures, as being sufficiently exposed, I shall commence the testimony of the fathers in the following chapter. I do not forget, indeed, that a portion of their argument is grounded on expediency, and on the beneficial results which, as they say, have followed the practical operation of their system on the best interests of mankind. All this, however, I shall postpone for the present. The rise, progress, and final consummation of their Confessional, presenting what I have called its history, now claims our attention; and their reasons of expediency, founded on experience, will be examined afterward.

CHAPTER VII.

TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS.

In proceeding to the evidence of the fathers, it may be necessary to premise, that Penitence is treated by them under a two-fold aspect: first, as an inward contrition of the heart on account of sin; and, secondly, as an external discipline, enjoined on those who, by gross offenses against the precepts of the Gospel, had incurred the sentence of excommunication. In the first sense, Penitence was a constant spiritual exercise of every Christian, and was included in that petition of the Lord's Prayer in which he was taught

daily to say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." But in the other sense of open discipline, during which the offender was separated from the communion and society of his brethren, it became a settled maxim in the primitive Church that it could only be allowed once, with the hope of restoration. In the case of the incestuous Corinthian, whom St. Paul directed the Church at Corinth to excommunicate (1 Cor., v.), and afterward, when the repentance and reformation of the offender appeared to be satisfactory, recommended them to receive again (2 Cor., ii., 6–11), we have a plain proof of apostolic authority for this act of discipline. And the oldest of the fathers who speaks upon the subject clearly shows that, so early as the close of the second century, the rule was general, that the excommunicated man, after his brethren and the ministry were convinced of his genuine contrition and amendment, might be readmitted to the communion of the faithful, but that if he fell under the same sentence again, he was cut off without return. Of the modern Roman Confessional, however, with its private and secret penance and absolution, the fathers appear to have had no conception.

Thus, commencing with the testimony of Tertullian, who may be set down about A.D. 200, we find him stating as follows:

"The Penitence which the grace of God accords to Christians, and which recalls them to the Lord, is *allowed but once, and ought not to be permitted after a repetition of the sin.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 2.)

"The laver of baptism is the seal of faith, which faith begins from penitence. We are not washed in order that we *may* cease from sinning, but because we *have* ceased, since we are already cleansed in heart. A second penitence is opened to us in the porch of the church, but *only once, because it is the second*; for *oftener than once, it would be vain.*—(*App.*, *Note* 3.)

The note of the Roman editor upon these passages states correctly (*App.*, *Note* 4) that the author alludes to the custom and rite of his day, which was, that penitents were obliged to remain in the porch or vestibule of the church for a certain time, and that only one *act of penitence was allowed after baptism.*

Tertullian next proceeds to state the discipline of penitence in these terms:

"The evidence of this second and only penitence is the more laborious, as it is not to be manifested in the conscience only, but in act; and this act is what the Greeks called *Exomologesis*" (i. e., confession), "by which we *confess our sin to the Lord*, not because He is ignorant of it, but because *satisfaction is prepared for by confession*, penitence commences in confession, and by penitence God is appeased."—(*App.*, *Note* 5.)

"Therefore, this Exomologesis (or penitential confession) is a discipline of prostration and humiliation, enjoining a behavior suitable to the obtaining of mercy, commanding the penitent concerning his garments and his food, that he shall lie on sackcloth and ashes, defile his body with dirt, deject his mind with grief, change with sorrowful treatment his incentives to sin, live on bread and water, not for the sake of his body, but of his soul, nourish his prayers with frequent fasting, groan, weep, moan day and night to the Lord his God, *fall down before the presbyters, and embrace the knees of those who are the beloved of God, beseeching all his brethren to intercede for him.*" .... "The less you spare yourself, the more, be assured, God will spare you. The major part, however, shun this *publication of their sin and this work of penitence*, or defer it from day to day, being more mindful, I presume, of their shame than of their safety; like those who, being diseased in the secret parts of their body, avoid the knowledge of their physicians, and so perish through their foolish modesty."—(*App.*, *Note* 6.)

Here we have a graphic description of penitence in the primitive Church, as it was practiced in the days of Tertullian; nor is there, in his whole treatise on the subject, the slightest allusion to any other discipline on account of sin. But it is to be especially noticed that he directs the penitent *to beseech his*

brethren to intercede for him, which shows that the ministers were not expected to decide on the propriety of restoring him by their own judgment alone, but by the common consent of the Church: just as St. Paul, in the case of the incestuous Corinthian, saith, "*To whom ye forgive, I forgive also.*" And this was evidently the only rule which could restore the offender to the confidence and love of his brethren, without which, in that primitive age, the communion of the saints would have been thought to have lost half its value.

My next witness is Cyprian, the famous bishop of Carthage, who recognizes, fifty years later, the same rule. Thus, speaking in reference to Ninus, Clementian, and Florus, who had been overcome by the force of torments to deny the faith in time of persecution, he saith:

"They had not ceased to perform the act of penitence, during *three years together*, for this heavy lapse; though they fell not by their will, but by necessity."

And then, addressing his clergy, he adds:

"Concerning whom you have thought it good to inquire, *whether it is yet lawful to admit them to the communion.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 7.)

Again, he complains of others who had been readmitted too soon, without the full period of their penitence having been accomplished, in these words:

"For notwithstanding sinners, who have offended in lesser transgressions, *are obliged to perform their penitence for the proper time, and then come to their confession according to the order of discipline*, and receive the *rite of communion by the imposition of the hands of the bishop and the clergy*; yet now, after an insufficient time, while the persecution still continues, and the peace of the Church herself has not yet been restored, these men are admitted, and their name is offered; although *their penitence has not been performed* nor *their confession made*, nor *the hands of the bishop and the clergy laid upon them*, the

Eucharist is given to them, when it is written, 'Whoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.'"—(*App.*, *Note* 8.)

My third witness, Lactantius, A.D. 306, speaks of the remission of sins without any allusion to the system of public penitence, but urges the necessity of the penitent's being sincere:

"Great is his privilege of mercy, to whom the Lord promises the remission of sins. If thou hearest the prayers of thy suppliant, saith the Almighty, I also will hear thine; if thou takest pity on those who are in trouble, I also will take pity on thee; but if thou wilt not regard nor help them, I also will bear thy mind against thyself, and will judge thee by thine own rules of action."—(*App.*, *Note* 9.)

"For God is mainly desirous to purge men from their sins, therefore He orders them to exercise repentance. But to exercise repentance is nothing else than to profess and affirm that we will not sin any more. Since, if our mortal condition does not allow us to be pure from all stain, our carnal sins should be abolished by a continual and abundant effort."—(*App.*, *Note* 10.)

"For if we ourselves, when we perceive our children to have repented of their offenses, and believe them to be reformed, although they have been cast off and disowned, do nevertheless receive them again, and cherish and embrace them, why should we despair of obtaining the clemency of our heavenly Father by repentance? Therefore the same Lord, who is our most indulgent Parent, promises that *He will remit the sins of the penitent, and will blot out all his iniquities, when he begins at length to follow righteousness.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 11.)

Here we perceive at once that Lactantius treats of repentance, under its spiritual aspect, as the daily exercise of the Christian in confessing his sins to God, praying for pardon in the name of the blessed Redeemer, and constantly watching his heart and his life, in order that the fruits of a genuine faith might accompany his efforts, and bear testimony to his growth in grace and holiness. He makes no reference to the public penitence of which Tertullian and Cyprian speak, when gross and mortal sins were com-

mitted, demanding the work of discipline, by which the offender was put away from the communion of the faithful, and obliged to remain prostrate in the vestibule of the church during the time of worship, with every mark of grief and self-abasement, until he was judged to have been sufficiently humbled and thoroughly reformed. We have already seen that it was enough to have been once subjected to this public penitence, according to the practice of those early ages; for there was no hope of a second return to the Church if the offender fell away again. But the other exercise of penitence continued to be necessary through life, and was essential to the spiritual growth and inward sanctification of all men. Of both the fathers speak freely, as I shall show in many extracts. Not one of them, however, recognizes the doctrine of private confession and absolution, by which the papal Church in after ages superseded the ancient system.

It does not appear that the public discipline, described by Tertullian, was regulated by any formal code until the fourth century. In the year 313, the Council of Elvira set the earliest example on record, and I shall cite a few of their penitential canons as a specimen of the whole; although I think it more than doubtful whether the simplicity of the primitive Church, in leaving the periods discretionary, was not altogether preferable.

CANON I.

"It pleased the Council that if any one, after the faith of saving baptism, and being of full age, should go to the temple for the purpose of playing the idolater, and should do so; for this principal crime, which is the highest wickedness, he shall be deprived of the communion to his life's end."—(*App.*, *Note* 12.)

CANON VII.

"If any of the faithful, after having committed adultery, and

fulfilled the appointed time of penitence, shall again become a fornicator, let him be deprived of the communion to his life's end."—(*App.*, *Note* 13.)

Canon VIII.

In like manner, those females who shall leave their husbands without any sufficient cause, and connect themselves with other men, shall be deprived of the communion until their life's end."—(*App.*, *Note* 14.)

Canon XXXII.

"If any one shall pass from the Catholic Church to heresy, and shall again return, penitence shall not be denied to him, forasmuch as he acknowledges his sin. Let him, therefore, perform penance for ten years. After ten years he ought to be admitted to the communion. But if infants have been thus led away, they ought to be received without delay, because they did not sin by their own fault."—(*App.*, *Note* 15.)

Canon LXXIV.

"A false witness, as perjury is a crime, shall abstain from communion. But if that of which he accused another was not a capital offense, and he can prove it, he shall abstain two years. If, however, he can not prove this to the council of the clergy, let him abstain five years."—(*App.*, *Note* 16.)

Canon LXXIX.

"If any of the faithful shall play at dice for money, he shall abstain from the communion; and if, being reformed, he shall cease to transgress, he may be reconciled after one year."—(*App.*, *Note* 17.)

One specimen more, taken from the XII. Canon of the General Council of Nice, A.D. 325, will be enough for the present to show the nature of public penitence in the primitive Church.

"If any, being called through the grace of God, have at first manifested their faith by laying aside their military girdle, but afterward have returned to their own vomit, and seek, by offering money and by other means, to enter the army again, let them remain ten years among the penitents, after they have been three years first among the hearers. In all such, however, especial attention shall be paid to their disposition, and to the fruits of their penitence. For those who show, with all

fear, and persevering tears, and good works, that their conversion is not only in words, but in deed and in truth, when their appointed time of hearing is fulfilled, may begin to communicate in the prayers of the Church, and it shall also be lawful for the bishop to think of somewhat more lenient concerning them. But those who treat their fall with indifference, and deem it sufficient that they are allowed to enter the Church, must accomplish the full period appointed."—(*App.*, *Note* 18.)

From these specimens, the system of public penitence is easily understood. But the private penitence practiced by every believer was a matter between the sinner and his God, and in vain shall we look for the slightest trace of the present doctrine of Rome, until long after the age of primitive purity. This assertion I shall fully establish by many other witnesses.

Thus Eusebius, the bishop of Cesarea, A.D. 325, writes as follows:

"The beginning of good is to abandon the former evil by true penitence and confession, which leads to a good end, namely, to God. For if there is none good but God, the beginning of the best way leading to God must be confession. Therefore it is written, *It is good to confess to the Lord. Moreover, it is meet that we utter our confession* NOT TO MEN, BUT TO GOD, WHO SEARCHES THE HEARTS."—(*App.*, *Note* 19.)

On the text of the Psalmist, *Confess to the Lord, and call upon his name*, Eusebius gives this commentary:

"A great matter is here indicated; for if, saith he, you have confessed and forsaken your sins, by invoking His name with confidence, you will be able to produce great things. Nor is it without reason that He desires us first to confess, and afterward to invoke Him, but it is in order that, being cleansed through confession, we may offer our hymn of praise from a pure instrument.—(*App.*, *Note* 20.)

"Confession is the beginning of our progress according to God, and joy in God is the end; but there are many things placed in the midst between these. It is first necessary, therefore, that men should confess to the Lord with sincere penitence, and with fruits agreeing with their confession; but after-

ward, having advanced to better things, they may have confidence and call upon His name: and thus, when, after confession, they supplicate him, they may be endowed with divine graces," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 21.)

It is impossible to suppose that in these and many similar passages this eminent father could have written thus, without the slightest allusion to the modern Roman system, if auricular confession and private priestly absolution had been known in his day.

But I pass on to the testimony of the still more famous Athanasius, the patriarch of Alexandria, who flourished about A.D. 340. In answer to the question, "What law gives the pardon of all sins?" he makes the following response:

"*The law of the Lord, saying: Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.* And again, *Forgive us our debts, like as we also forgive our debtors.* Hence it appears that not to judge our neighbor *gives pardon for all sins.* The same applies to the not remembering offenses. *Forgive, saith He, and you shall be forgiven.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 22.)

In reply to another question, "If a man shall have committed a very grievous sin, and repented, how shall we learn whether he has been forgiven by God or no?" Athanasius gives this answer:

"This, truly, is made plain to few men upon earth: nevertheless, even as it is between the master and the servant, so is it between the conscience of a man and God. Thus, as the servant who has offended, may know, from the gestures and language of his master, that he is not in the same favor as he was before; in like manner the sinner loses the liberty of speaking which his conscience previously possessed in his prayers. *But when he has truly repented, God grants to him again the liberty of speaking with Him, which he had before his sin. And by this the man knows that God has pardoned his sin.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 23.)

Here, again, the whole work of penitence, confession, and absolution, is presented as an *internal* matter between the soul and the Redeemer, without the

slightest allusion to the Roman system of priestly intervention. The delusion of their tribunal of penance, in which a poor infirm mortal is invested with the authority of Christ over his fellow, and undertakes to enjoin his works of satisfaction to the justice of God, and to pronounce in positive terms that his sins are forgiven, stands in marked contrast to the simple and spiritual theology of the fourth century.

Let us next hear the admirable Cyril, archbishop of Jerusalem, whose Catechetical Discourses, published A.D. 345, are among the most interesting remains of antiquity.

"The present time is the time of confession. Confess what thou hast perpetrated, either in word or in deed, whether by night or by day. If thou hast any thing against another, forgive. Thou drawest near that thou mayest receive the pardon of thy sins; it is necessary that thou also pardon him that sins against thee; otherwise *with what front wilt thou say to the Lord, forgive my many sins, when thou hast not forgiven thy fellow-servant even a few?*"—(*App.*, *Note* 24.)

"Benignant is God, and greatly benignant; for say not thou, I have been a fornicator and adulterer; I have committed grievous crimes, and that not once only, but very often. Will He pardon them? Will He grant that they may be forgotten? Hear what the Psalmist declares: *How great is the multitude of thy mercy, O Lord!* Thine accumulated sins overcome not the multitude of the divine mercies. Thy wounds exceed not the skill of the Supreme Physician. Only give thyself up to Him with faith. *Rehearse to the Physician thy disease;* say thou with David, *I said, I will declare against myself my iniquity to the Lord*, and it shall be done to thee like that which follows: *And thou hast forgiven the impiety of my heart.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 25.)

Here, too, we read not a word about confession to the priest, nor a syllable concerning sacerdotal absolution.

My ninth witness is the celebrated Hilary, bishop of Poictiers, who is usually placed A.D. 350; and

from his works I purpose to take a larger testimony, worthy of special attention.

"The greatest and most useful medicine," saith Hilary, "for the diseases of our deadly sins is in the confession of them. But the confession of sin is not like the professing of matters unknown to others; as if a thief, being interrogated concerning his theft, or a homicide concerning his bloodshedding, should confess it. Neither is it as if God, who searcheth the heart and the reins, needs thy confession for His knowledge, since He sees at once not only the things which have been thought, but also those which will be thought hereafter. The confession of sin is this, that thou, through the knowledge of sin, mayest confess thine act to be sin; but no man ought thenceforth to repeat what he has confessed to be sin, because the confession of sin is the profession of abstaining. Therefore, all our vices being purged away by confession, there is need of abstaining; and we must always pray to God that, in curbing our sins and extinguishing their incentives, He will strengthen the doubtful efforts of our will; for which reason the prophet, already confident, through his confession and prayer, places himself within the port of innocence when he says, *I will confess to thee, O Lord, with my whole heart, since thou hast heard the words of my mouth.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 26.)

"Therefore, let all our hope be directed to God, and *all our confession be in God*, according to the example of the prophet, saying, *O Lord, my help and my redeemer.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 27.)

"In confession to God, nothing should be kept back, hidden, concealed, or bound up in the heart. Every affection must be spread out before Him, that there may be no confidence in ourselves, but that through Him, before whom, as it were, we pour ourselves forth for sin, we may be aided."—(*App.*, *Note* 28.)

"Wherever there is the confession of sin, there is justification by God, which is testified by our Lord in the publican and the Pharisee, when the Pharisee gloried that he was righteous, but the publican prayed for his sins."—(*App.*, *Note* 29.)

In all these passages from Hilary we have the same doctrine of the Scriptures: repentance toward God, confession to God, forgiveness by God, without the slightest allusion to the priest, the secret tribunal of penance, the power of sacerdotal absolution, or any thing else that savors of the papal doctrine. But one

extract more from his commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew may be advisable, because it enters with still greater fullness into the saving truth that Christ is the only Dispenser of forgiveness to the sinner. The passage is as follows:

"It moves the Scribes that sin was remitted by a man, for they only saw a man in Jesus Christ, and that He undertook to remit what the law was not able to relax. FOR FAITH ALONE JUSTIFIES. Then the Lord beholds their inward murmuring, and saith, that it is easy for the Son of Man to forgive sins upon the earth; for truly no one is able to forgive sins except God only: *therefore He who remits is God, because no one remits except God.* God dwelling in man supplies the remedy to man; and there was no difficulty of speaking or acting to Him, who could do all that He speaks. Moreover, that He, thus placed in the body, might be understood to be the same who could both forgive the sins of their souls and effect the resurrection of their bodies, He saith, *That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power upon the earth to forgive sins, he saith to the paralytic: Arise, take up thy bed: and they honored God, who gave such power to men.* In this order, all things are concluded, and the fear of desperation now ceasing, honor is rendered to God, because He had given such power to men: *but this was due to Christ alone; to Him alone, through the communion of the substance of His Father, was it suitable to do these things.* It is not, therefore, a subject of wonder that He could act thus (for what shall be thought impossible with God?), otherwise the praise would be of one man, and not of many: but the cause of the honor ascribed to God is this: that the privilege is given to men by this way through His Word, *of the remission of their sins, of the resurrection of their bodies, and of their admission into heaven.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 30.)

Here our primitive witness puts the remission of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the heavenly inheritance, all in the same connection with the immediate prerogative of Christ's divine nature. Certainly, if the doctrine of Trent had then been established, that God only remits sins through the intervention of priestly absolution in the secret tribunal of auricular confession, it seems impossible to account

for the total absence of any allusion to it in an argument like this.

My tenth witness is Basil the Great, bishop of Cesarea, whose testimony may be set down to A.D. 370. And this eminent father presents the rules of penitence and confession according to the primitive plan, and in terms quite irreconcilable with the Roman doctrine. His words are these:

"The Judge desires to have compassion upon thee, and to make thee a partaker of His mercies: if only, after thou hast sinned, He finds thee humble, *contrite, greatly lamenting thine evil deeds, and publishing without shame those things which have been secretly committed, beseeching the brethren that they may be a help to thee toward receiving thy cure.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 31.)

Here we may observe, that Basil requires the penitent to publish to his brethren even his secret sins, in order to have the benefit of their supplications. There was then no private confession to the priest alone, no private absolution, but all was open to the knowledge and the sympathy of the faithful laity, and referred, in prayer, to God. And the same spiritual principle is strongly urged in the following extract:

"One thing, above all, is to be avoided by thee, namely, sin; and thy only refuge from evil deeds is God. Trust not in princes, be not carried away in the uncertain pursuit of riches, be not proud of your bodily strength, follow not after the splendor of human glory. None of these leads to salvation, they are all temporary, all deceitful: your only refuge is God. *Cursed is the man who places his hope in man, or in any human thing.*" —(*App.*, *Note* 32.)

The next two passages are taken from Basil's rules for monasteries. The reader ought, perhaps, to be informed or reminded that the institution of monachism had been unhappily introduced into the Church about the close of the previous century, and was yet in its infancy. The rules prescribed to the monks by Ba-

sil were arranged in questions and answers, and his system obtained great repute, being still followed by many of the Oriental Christians.

"QUESTION. *Is it proper to disclose our forbidden actions, without shame, to all, or only to certain persons, and who are these?*

"ANSWER. The same rule is to be observed in the confession of sins which obtains in disclosing the diseases of the body. In like manner, therefore, as men do not lay open the diseases of the body to all, nor to any one, but to those who are skilled in curing them, so likewise the confession of sins ought to be made before those who are able to cure them, as it is written, *You who are strong, bear the infirmities of the weak;* that is, *Take them away by care and diligence.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 33.)

"QUESTION. *Ought he who wishes to confess his sins to confess them to all, and to any one, or to whom?*

"ANSWER. It is necessary to confess your sins to those to whom the dispensation of the mysteries of God is committed; for so likewise those who formerly exercised penitence are related to have done it before the saints. Thus it is written, in the Gospel, that sins were confessed to John the Baptist; but in the Acts, to the apostles themselves, by whom also they were all baptized."—(*App.*, *Note* 34.)

One sentence more will be required to show Basil's view of this matter fully:

"It is proper, however, not to drive them" (*i. e.*, penitents) "from the Church altogether, but to allow them a place among the hearers for two or three years, and afterward to permit them to stand with the faithful, but let them abstain from the communion; and thus, some fruit of their penitence being manifested, they may be restored to the place of communion."—(*App.*, *Note* 35.)

Here, in the questions designed for the use of the monks, there is some appearance of an approach to the Roman system. But the difference is still so great as to form a marked distinction. I might observe, indeed, that Basil, directing confession to be made to those who have committed to them the dispensation of the divine mysteries, and referring for proof to the Acts of the Apostles, was plainly mistaken, since there

is no example in the Acts of persons confessing their sins, after baptism, either to the apostles or to any one else. But the main point to be remarked is, that the Roman Catechism states the system of auricular confession to the priest as a thing of divine institution, grounded on the express commission of Christ, saying, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted," &c. (which I have already shown to be connected with baptism, p. 71); while Basil, on the contrary, claims no such authority, but places his rule on the analogy of human discretion, comparing the case of sinners disclosing their transgressions to the priests with the custom of sick men telling their diseases to the physicians. Secondly, he says nothing of secrecy, nor of private absolution, nor of any sacramental virtue connected with the act of the priest, all of which are indispensable to the Roman system. Thirdly, the very fact that such questions were propounded on behalf of the monks, affords reasonable evidence that the priests of those days had not yet arrogated any such prerogative. Fourthly, the rule for the monasteries must be understood in consistency with the other passages, where Basil speaks of penitence according to the old practice of keeping transgressors from the communion for years together, and exhorts sinners to disclose to their brethren, without shame, those sins which had been secretly committed. But lastly and especially, when Basil speaks of confessing their sins before those who are able to cure them, he evidently makes no allusion to any act of priestly absolution, but only to the results of pastoral oversight; for he explains himself by saying, that the sins were to be "taken away by care and diligence."

And with this accords the testimony of Gregory, bishop of Nazianzen, the cotemporary and friend of

Basil. I shall cite him, therefore, as my eleventh witness to the established system of the primitive day:

"Do not think it grievous to confess thy sin, knowing in what covenant John baptized: that *by the shame of the present life thou mayest escape the shame and ignominy of the life to come*, and mayest make it manifest that thou hatest and detestest sin, seriously and sincerely, while thou dost treat it as if worthy of contumely, and expose it to scorn, and accomplish thy triumph over it." —(*App.*, *Note* 36.)

These reiterated exhortations of the ancient fathers to disregard the shame of public penitence, in order to obtain the pardon of their sins, afford the strongest proof that the papal system had not been yet invented. For why should any man expose himself to a public disgrace who could obtain equal benefit from a private tribunal of strict secrecy? And why should he be told to wait for years without absolution and restoration to the communion, when he could receive them both by the secret authority of a single priest without any delay whatever?

But it is time to close this chapter, lest I weary the patience of my readers by too long a list of proofs without the relief of an occasional pause. I have yet many witnesses to bring forward, and I must invoke the spirit of persevering attention, in order that their evidence may be considered with care and reflection, and that the labor of collecting their testimony be not in vain.

CHAPTER VIII.

TESTIMONY OF AMBROSE AND JEROME.

AMBROSE, the celebrated bishop of Milan, is my twelfth witness to prove the established doctrine and practice of the primitive Church, and his testimony may be taken as extending from the year 374, when he was made bishop, to the year 397, when he died. My extracts from this author are so numerous, that it will be expedient to classify them under the following heads: 1. The public and the private exercise of penitence. 2. The mode of performing private penitence. 3. The mode of performing public penitence. 4. The absolution given by the priesthood when the penitent was restored to the communion. 5. The general results of the divine correction and discipline to the penitent sinner.

1. *The Public and the Private Exercise of Penitence.*

"Those persons are justly to be censured who think that penitence may be exercised often, because they grow wanton in Christ; for if they would exercise penitence truly, they would not think of repeating it afterward, because, as there is but one baptism, so there is but one penitence, which, nevertheless, is performed publicly, for we ought to repent, indeed, of our daily sin; but this penitence is for lighter offenses, that for the more weighty."—(*App.*, *Note* 37.)

Here we see Ambrose asserting the same doctrine of one exercise of public penitence, and no more, which Tertullian had recognized nearly two centuries earlier. But daily private penitence was held by all the fathers to be a constant duty.

2. *The Mode of performing Private Penitence.*

"I SAID, O LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON ME; HEAL MY SOUL, FOR I HAVE SINNED AGAINST THEE. This may also have been said in the person of King David, who, seeing in the Spirit the victory and grace of Christ, asks that in that remission of all sins He would have mercy also upon his. Therefore he confesses his sin, that he may receive forgiveness, and may find the gift of general pardon."—(*App.*, *Note* 38.)

"He saith further, I WILL DECLARE MY INIQUITY TO THE LORD. It is not enough, however, that we confess our error; but if we desire also to be corrected, let us ask of the Lord that He will teach us His righteousness, lest we may err again. Therefore he seeks to be taught by the Lord, because One is our Master, as saith Christ. Nor does he seek this in vain, for he is not blessed whom man teacheth, but he whom Thou instructest, O Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 39.)

"Therefore he whose sins Christ has pardoned, rightly saith: *Recompense thy servant, that I may live, and I will keep thy word.* As in the book of the prophet He himself testifies, saying, *I, I am He who blotteth out thine iniquities, and will remember them no more.* Whoever, therefore, declares his iniquities to the Lord, is justified; and whoever is justified, does not fear recompense, but asks for it; and he who does not fear recompense shall live."—(*App.*, *Note* 40.)

"But humility recommends prayer. Thus that Pharisee was reproved who enumerated his fasts as if they were benefits, and, as it were, thrust them before God, and counted himself guiltless of all transgressions. But the publican was commended, *who, standing afar off, would not lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, O Lord God, be merciful to me a sinner.* And so the divine sentence preferred him, saying, *This publican went down justified rather than the Pharisee.* For he is justified who confesses his own sin, as the Lord himself has testified: *Declare thine iniquities, that thou mayest be justified.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 41.)

All this may be properly understood of the daily private exercise of penitence, and here there is no allusion whatever to the intervention of the priest, or the tribunal of sacerdotal confession, but the whole is the habitual utterance of the humble soul direct to God, followed by the divine acceptance and blessing.

I have next, however, to consider the statements of our author under a different head.

3. *The Mode of performing Public Penitence.*

"He who exercises penitence ought to be prepared to bear opprobrium, and submit to reproaches, nor should he be moved if any one taunts him with his crime. For when he should accuse himself, why should he not bear the accusation of another?" —(*App.*, *Note* 42.)

"*Father*, saith the prodigal son, *I have sinned against heaven and before thee.* This is the first confession to the Author of nature, the Prince of mercy, the Judge of guilt. But although God knows all things, He waits for the voice of thy confession. *For with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* In vain wouldst thou conceal aught from Him, whom nothing can deceive, and thou mayest disclose without danger what thou art aware is already known. Rather confess that Christ may undertake for thee, for He is our Advocate with the Father; let the Church pray for thee, and let the people weep. Nor shouldst thou fear that thou wilt not obtain. Thine Advocate assures thee pardon, thy Patron promises grace, the Proclaimer of paternal piety pledges to thee a reconciliation. Believe, because it is truth: submit, because it is virtue."—(*App.*, *Note* 43.)

"I have found more easily those who have preserved their innocence than those who have exercised penitence thoroughly. Can any one deem that to be penitence where there is the ambition of acquiring dignity, and the pouring out of wine, and the use even of conjugal pleasure? The world should be renounced; the very sleep which nature requires should be abridged; he must be hindered by groanings, interrupted by sighs, drawn off by prayers; he must live as if dead to the uses of mortality; the man must deny himself and be wholly changed."—(*App.*, *Note* 44.)

"If any one, therefore, having committed secret crimes, would nevertheless, for Christ's sake, diligently exercise penitence, how does he receive the fruits of penitence if the communion is not restored to him? I will that the culprit should hope for pardon; let him seek it with tears, let him seek it with groanings, let him seek it with the bewailings of all the people, let him beseech that he may be forgiven; and when his communion is delayed a second and a third time, let him believe that he has supplicated too remissly, let him increase his weeping, let him afterward return more wretched, let him embrace

their feet with his arms, let him cover them with kisses, let him wash them with tears, nor let him cease, that the Lord Jesus may say of him, *His sins, which are many, are forgiven because he loved much.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 45.)

"I have known some in their penitence who had wrinkled their face with tears, furrowed their cheeks with continual weeping, prostrated their bodies to be trodden on by all, and who presented in their living person the vacant and pallid appearance of death."—(*App.*, *Note* 46.)

To a consecrated virgin, who had fallen into the sin of fornication, Ambrose addresses himself as follows:

"But thou who hast already entered the struggle of penitence, persevere, O miserable woman; cling strongly, as if to a plank in shipwreck, hoping that by this thou mayest be delivered from the abyss of thy crimes. Adhere to penitence even to thy last hour, nor do thou presume that pardon can be given thee in the present life, for he who would promise thee this only deceives thee. Since thou hast sinned directly against the Lord, from himself alone canst thou expect the remedy in the day of judgment."—(*App.*, *Note* 47.)

To her seducer, Ambrose gives this counsel:

"Thou mayest seek willingly the prison of penitence, bind thy bowels with chains, torment thy soul with groans and fastings, implore the help of the saints, lie down under the feet of the elect, that thine impenitent heart may not lay up for thee wrath in the day of wrath, and of the just judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his works."—(*App.*, *Note* 48.)

These extracts show sufficiently the open manifestation of severe self-discipline expected in the case of public penitents; and we have next to hear the same witness on the subject of the absolution with which the bishop and the clergy admitted them to the communion after their course of penitence was accomplished; although, as we have already seen, there were many sins so aggravated, in the judgment of the primitive Church, that there was no possibility of return to the society of the faithful in the present life, but only a hope allowed that Christ might still for-

give them in the great day. Our fourth head, therefore, will be,

4. *The Absolution given by the Priesthood when the Public Penitent was restored.*

"The Church keeps in both respects the rule of obedience, as well in binding as in loosing sin. Justly, therefore, does the Church claim this power, which has true priests; heresy can not claim it, because it has no priests of God."—(*App.*, *Note* 49.)

"Behold this also, that he who receives the Holy Spirit, likewise receives the power of loosing and binding sin; for thus it is written, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins ye shall remit, they are remitted; and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained.* Therefore, he who can not remit sin has not the Holy Spirit. The office of the priest is the gift of the Holy Spirit, but in loosing and in binding crimes, the right is of the Holy Spirit; how, therefore, should they claim the gift of Him, whose right and power they do not believe?"—(*App.*, *Note* 50.)

"But men, in the remission of sins, only exhibit their ministry; they do not exercise the right of any power. For it is not in their own name, but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that they remit sins. They ask, the Deity gives; for the ministration is human, but the conveyance of the gift is of divine power."—(*App.*, *Note* 51.)

"*I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* What is said to Peter is said to the apostles. We do not usurp power, but serve His government, lest afterward, when the Lord shall come, and shall find those bound who ought to be loosed, He may be moved against the steward who has kept those servants bound whom the Lord had ordered to be loosed."—(*App.*, *Note* 52.)

"Why, therefore, do you use the imposition of hands, and believe the efficacy of benediction, if, happily, any sick man has recovered? Why do you presume that any can be cleansed through you from the filth of the devil? Why do you baptize, if it is not lawful, through man, to remit sins? For truly, in baptism there is the remission of all sins; but what does it signify whether through penitence or through the font the priests claim this right to be given them? In both there is the one mystery."—(*App.*, *Note* 53.)

Now in all this we perceive the same principle.

The first reception of the penitent believer in baptism was through the ministry; his confirmation and admission to the feast of the Eucharist were by the ministry; when his sins made it necessary to debar him from the communion, it was by the sentence of the ministry. And of course, when his penitence was deemed sufficient, and his offenses were to be absolved, it was also through the same ministry. But as all the other acts of the ministry were open, and in the face of the Church (the exigency of sickness and the peril of death being the only exceptions), so the reception of the penitent was public likewise; nor could it have been regarded as any thing short of absurdity to close a *public* penitence by a *private* absolution.

The last head of testimony from the eminent Ambrose yet remains, namely:

5. *The General Results of the Divine Correction and Discipline to the Penitent Sinner.*

"To perform penitence is the true medicine which is then lawfully set forth, when the Physician comes from heaven, who would not exasperate our wounds, but heal them."—(*App.*, *Note* 54.)

"And, therefore, let us who are in this body of death, pray that this Physician, beloved of God, may not desert us, whom the patriarch David prayed that He might not depart from him. Behold how the patient that would be healed yields to the Physician in every thing! Attend to the order. He first opens his wounds to the Physician, and saith, Heal me, but I pray thee not in thine anger, because my infirmities can not bear harsh medicine. The medicine of Christ is chastisement, for the Lord chastiseth whom He would convert."—(*App.*, *Note* 55.)

"Take away, then, O Lord Jesus, with thy powerful knife, the rottenness of my sins: whilst thou holdest me tied with the bonds of love, cut away whatever is corrupted. I have found the Physician who inhabits heaven, and scatters His medicine upon earth. He alone can cure my wounds, who is himself undefiled: He alone can bear away the grief of the heart and

the paleness of the soul, who knows all secret things."—(*App.*, *Note* 56.)

"He is not confounded, even although he may have committed shameful things, who asks the pardon of his sins from Christ. For so it is answered to him, Thy sins are forgiven . . . Go in peace. But then only he is not confounded, if the remission of sins is so wrought within him, that not only the sin, but even the desire of sinning, is taken away. Let righteousness remit iniquity; fortitude, fear; temperance, impurity; that the remission of his sins may be not merely temporary, but perpetual. Let Christ enter into thy soul, let Jesus inhabit thy thoughts, that there may be no place for sin in the tabernacle of virtue."—(*App.*, *Note* 57.)

Thus we have the sentiments of this primitive witness at large, in which it is impossible to find a single expression favorable to the Roman doctrine in its peculiar and distinctive form. There is no allusion to the *sacrament* of penance, the exposition of which, as the Catechism of Trent declares, "demands greater accuracy than that of baptism." There is no confession of sins to the priest, other than the public confession which the penitent made likewise in the presence of all his brethren. The power of the priesthood to absolve the penitent is expressly and carefully stated to be *ministerial*, and not *judicial*, in direct contradiction to the Roman system. Sins of peculiar atrocity are considered beyond the reach of earthly absolution; and penitence, once allowed, is never repeated: whereas the Church of Rome undertakes to absolve from all sins, and accommodates the perpetrators with equal readiness, no matter how often they may have been absolved before; while the cases reserved are not left to the decision of Christ in the day of judgment, but are merely transferred from the priests to the bishops and the pope. Above all, however, there is here no secret tribunal of sacerdotal dictation and inquisition, where the confessor sits as in the place of God!

And yet it is obvious that in treating so largely on the very subject of penitence, it would have been impossible for Ambrose to have omitted all allusion to these things, were it not for the very sufficient reason that the Church of Christ was as yet a total stranger to the modern Roman system.

I pass next to the testimony of my thirteenth witness, Epiphanius, the bishop of Salamis, who was cotemporary with Ambrose, and died A.D. 403. His language is as follows:

"Truly, penitence is perfect in baptism. But if any one should fall, the holy Church of God does not will him to be lost; yea, she allows him to be received, after penitence and the opportunity of changing his will."—(*App.*, *Note* 58.)

"As for those who have lapsed in time of persecution, even to them, if they weep before the Lord, sitting in sackcloth and ashes, and perform the full penitence appointed, the beneficent God is able to apply his mercy."—(*App.*, *Note* 59.)

On these brief extracts I would only remark, 1st. That our witness agrees with all the rest in making the restoration of the penitent the act of the Church, and not the solitary, private function of the priesthood; and, 2d. That he requires the penitence to be completed before the restoration.

My fourteenth witness will yield a large testimony, and a more important one, on account of his eminent authority in the primitive Church, and his remarkable character for learning and sanctity. I refer to the celebrated Jerome, who was another cotemporary, in part, of Ambrose, but survived him about twenty-five years, having died A.D. 422, at the advanced age of ninety.

"However grievous the sin of any one may be, if he be converted, he may be healed."—(*App.*, *Note* 60.)

"Every one is bound by the cords of his sins, which cords and chains the apostles are able to loose, imitating their Master, who had said to them, *Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth*,

shall be loosed also in heaven. But the apostles loose them by the Word of God, and the testimonies of the Scriptures, and the exhortation to virtue."—(*App.*, *Note* 61.)

"To the discipline of the priest it belongs to answer questions concerning the law. For if he shows himself not only a lover of ignorance in other things, but neglectful in the Holy Scriptures, he boasts in vain of a dignity whose works he does not exhibit. This is what the Apostle Paul writes to Titus, that he should be powerful to exhort with sound doctrine, to convince the gainsayers. And to Timothy: As thou hast known from infancy the sacred Scriptures, which are able to instruct thee unto salvation, that thou mayest rebuke sinners before all."—(*App.*, *Note* 62.)

"If that serpent the devil has privily bitten any one, and has infected him with the poison of sin, no one being conscious of it, and he does not exercise penitence, nor is willing to confess his wound to his brother and Master, his Master, who has the tongue to cure him, can not easily profit him. For if the sick man is ashamed to confess to the physician the wound which he knows not, the medicine does not cure."—(*App.*, *Note* 63.)

"Blessed are those whose iniquities are pardoned, and whose sins, through confession, are washed away by the Lord. But by what modes are sins remitted? By three. They are remitted through baptism, they are covered by charity, they are not imputed through martyrdom."—(*App.*, *Note* 64.)

Now here it is worthy of great remark that Jerome takes no notice whatever of any prerogative, even of the apostles themselves, in the remission of sins, save only what they exercised "by the Word of God, the testimonies of the Scriptures, and the exhortations to virtue;" that he specially quotes St. Paul's command to Timothy, to rebuke those that sinned "before all;" that the only confession he recommends the sinner to make is to his "brother and Master," where it is evident that the term brother refers no more to the priest than to any other Christian; and the term Master as evidently can only refer to Christ. Lastly, we see that Jerome reckons only three modes by which sins are remitted through the acts of human

agency, baptism, charity, and martyrdom. Charity, however, in this passage, is doubtless intended, not to exclude penitence, but to distinguish the quality which makes penitence effectual before God, according to that declaration of the Saviour, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, because she loved much."

I may here mention the statement of the Roman scholiast on Jerome, that the learned Erasmus, who lived and died in the communion of the Church of Rome, "denies the secret confession of sins to have been practiced among the ancients, and admits only the public confession, which was made on account of public sins."—(*App.*, *Note* 65.)

As to the reference of the Trentine Catechism to the sentence of Jerome about penitence being "the second plank after shipwreck," it is precisely in accordance with what we have already seen in all the other witnesses who speak of the one allowance of public penitence after baptism. And I shall only add, that Jerome, in his epistle to Rusticus,* collects a great number of passages from Scripture on the subject of penitence, without taking the slightest notice of confession to the priests, or even of the penitential canons, only urging confession to God.

My next witness, who is the most voluminous, as well as the most profound of the fathers, furnishes so large an amount of evidence, that it will be expedient to make his testimony the subject of a distinct chapter.

* Tom. i., p. 142–5.

CHAPTER IX.

TESTIMONY OF AUGUSTIN.

It is a subject of no small gratification to me, that in turning to Augustin, whom the Church of Rome acknowledges as the most eminent, on the whole, among the ancient fathers, I shall be able to demonstrate in the clearest manner the novelty of their present system; for although his testimony, in the main, does not differ from that of his predecessors, yet his statements are more full and precise, and therefore less capable of evasion. I appeal, therefore, to this, my fifteenth witness, with considerable confidence, that even the judgment of Romanists might be satisfied, if unhappily their figment of infallibility did not shut them out from the possibility of conviction. The language of Augustin is as follows:

"There are three kinds of penitence which your Erudition recognizes, as I do; for they are familiar in the Church of God, and known to those who are diligently attentive. One is that which travails with the new man, until, through saving baptism, the washing away of all past sins takes place; so that, as when a child is born, the pains pass off by which the womb was urged to the birth, joy may follow sorrow. For every one who is already made the arbiter of his own will, when he comes to the sacraments of the faithful, unless he repents of his old life, he can not begin with the new one. From this kind of penitence when they are baptized, infants alone are exempted, because they can not as yet use free will."—(*App.*, *Note* 66.)

"Another kind of penitence is that which is required in the perpetual humility of supplication, through the whole of this life which we pass in our fleshly tabernacle. Whence, also,

when we pray, we say, what through our whole life we are bound to say, *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.* For we do not pray that those debts should be forgiven, concerning which, unless we believe that they are already forgiven in baptism, we doubt of the faith itself; but we say this rather concerning our daily sins, for which also every one offers, without ceasing, the sacrifices of alms, fastings, and prayers, and supplications, with all his power."—(*App.*, *Note* 67.)

"The third kind of penitence is that which is to be performed for the sins committed against the laws contained in the Decalogue, and concerning which the Apostle saith, *For those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Therefore, in this penitence every one ought to exercise a greater severity toward himself, that, being judged by himself, he may not be judged by the Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 68.)

"Being bound, therefore, by the chains of these deadly sins, does any man refuse, or delay, or doubt whether he should have recourse to those keys of the Church by which he may be loosed on earth, in order that he may be loosed in heaven? Let a man, then, judge himself in these by his own will, while he is able, and amend his ways; lest, when he is no longer able, he may, against his will, be judged by the Lord. And when he shall have pronounced against himself the sentence of this most severe medicine, but yet a medicine still, let him come to the presiding ministers, by whom in the Church those keys are applied, and as already beginning to be a good son, the order being observed of his Mother's children, let him accept the mode of his satisfaction from those who preside over the sacraments, so that, being devout and suppliant in offering the sacrifice of a sorrowful heart, he may do what shall not only be profitable to his own salvation, but shall also serve for an example to others. To this end, if his sin be not merely to his own grievous injury, but is likewise a cause of scandal to others, and if it shall seem expedient for the good of the Church in the judgment of the bishop, let him not refuse to exercise penitence in the presence of many, or even of all the people: let him not resist, nor, through shame, add inflammation to the mortal and deadly wound."—(*App.*, *Note* 69.)

"And let no one think, brethren, on account of these things, that he ought to despise the use of this salutary penitence, because he may, perhaps, observe and know that many come to the sacrament of the altar of whose crimes he is not ignorant. For many are corrected, like Peter; many are tolerated, like

Judas; many are unknown, until the coming of the Lord, who shall illuminate the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the thoughts of the heart; for most men are unwilling to accuse others, desiring to be excused by them. And many good Christians are silent, and suffer the sins of others which they know, because the testimonies are often wanting, and those things with which they are themselves acquainted can not be proved to the ecclesiastical judges; for although certain things may indeed be true, yet they are not to be easily credited by the judge, unless they are substantiated by certain evidence. *But we can not prohibit any one from the Communion* (although this prohibition is not yet mortal, but medicinal) *unless he be accused and convicted, either by his own voluntary confession, or by some secular or ecclesiastical judgment.* For who would dare to take it upon himself, that he should act against any man both as accuser and judge?"—(*App.*, *Note* 70.)

Now here we have the positive and irrefragable proof, which totally destroys the claims of the Roman system to an apostolical, or even a primitive origin. How little idea had Augustin, when he wrote this paragraph, that the time would ever come *for prohibiting all Christians from the sacrament, until they had passed through the private confessional of the priest, and been forced to answer every question which he might choose to put to them, under the penalty of excommunication?* No contrast can be more complete than that exhibited between the fair and reasonable freedom of the Church, in the time of this ancient witness, and the priestly despotism which was fastened upon it in after ages. And the picture of relaxed discipline and inconsistent discipleship which Augustin sets before us in this passage, is a fair parallel with the condition of most Christian communities in our own day. The Church had declined from her first zeal and devotion. A hundred years and more had passed away since the fires of heathen persecution had been exchanged for worldly peace and honor. And although the image of the ancient strict-

ness remained, and its form and principles were inculcated, yet the vigor of its administration had vanished to return no more.

The theory of Augustin on the power of the keys will be shown by the following passages:

"It is not without reason that Peter, among all the apostles, sustains the person of the Catholic Church, for to this Church the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given, when they were given to Peter. And when it is said to him, it is said to all, *Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep.* Therefore the Catholic Church ought willingly to pardon her children, when they are corrected and confirmed in piety."—(*App.*, *Note* 71.)

"For the Church is His body, as the apostolic doctrine declares, where she is called even His spouse."—(*App.*, *Note* 72.)

"These keys, therefore, He gave to His Church, that those things which she should loose on earth might be loosed in heaven, and those which she should bind on earth might be bound in heaven; so that whoever should not believe his sins to be remitted in the Church, they would not be remitted."—(*App.*, *Note* 73.)

"And when He said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost,' He immediately added, 'Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted;' that is, the Spirit remits, not you. For the Spirit is God. God, therefore, remits; not you. But what are you to the Spirit? 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' And again: 'Know ye not that your bodies are a temple, that in you is the Spirit of the Holy One, whom you have from God?' God, therefore, dwells in His holy temple, that is, in holy believers, in His Church; through them He remits sins, because they are living temples."—(*App.*, *Note* 74.)

On this point, namely, whether the keys were given to Peter individually, or to the Church universal of which Peter was a figure, Augustin, at different times, held different opinions; the Roman doctrine being the sentiment of his early ministry, but abandoned in his latter years. Thus he saith, in his Retractations:

"But I know that afterward I explained most frequently the saying of our Lord, *Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church:* so that *upon this* might be understood of Him whom

Peter had confessed, saying, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;* and thus Peter, so called from this Rock, might represent the person of the Church, which is built upon this Rock, and hath received the keys of the kingdom of heaven. For it is not said to him, Thou art the Rock (Petra), but *Thou art Peter*, (Petrus). But the Rock was Christ, whom Simon confessed, even as the whole Church confesses Him, and was called Peter."—(*App.*, *Note* 75.)

Augustin, however, clearly allows the authority of governors and judges to the bishops, as all the ancient fathers did. Thus, interpreting the declaration of the prophet in the book of Revelation, "*I saw thrones and those who sat upon them, and judgment was given to them,*" Augustin saith:

"This is not to be understood as uttered concerning the last judgment, but concerning the thrones of the bishops, and the bishops themselves, by whom the Church is now governed; for the judgment given to them can not be better explained than by that saying, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven,*" &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 76.)

And yet he maintains the priesthood of the laity, from another passage of the same prophecy, none the less strongly; for, commenting on the declaration of the prophet, "*They shall be the priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years,*" he gives the following explanation:

"This is not said alone of bishops and presbyters, who are now properly called priests in the Church; but even as we are all called Christians" (i. e., anointed ones), "by reason of the mystic unction, so we are all called priests, since we are members of the One Priest: of whom the apostle Peter speaks, saying, *A holy people, a royal priesthood.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 77.)

The application of this doctrine to the remission of sins by the discipline of the Church, will be easily understood when we remember that, while the people had no power to restore the penitent without the authority of the bishop and the clergy, so neither did the bishop and clergy act without the assent of the

people. Therefore we have seen the frequent exhortations of the fathers to the penitent, urging him to embrace the feet of the saints, and beseech them earnestly to intercede on his behalf; for, the power of the keys being lodged in the whole Church, the consent of the whole Church is presumed in their application, which the official governors of the Church are then only authorized to declare, when it is believed to be in accordance with the judgment of the brethren.

Such is the precise principle followed in our own system, as is plain from the Rubric which directs the course to be pursued when communicants are repelled from the Lord's table. "If among those who come to be partakers of the Holy Communion, the minister shall know any to be an open and notorious evil liver, or to have done any wrong to his neighbors by word or deed, *so that the congregation be thereby offended*, he shall advertise him, that he presume not to come to the Lord's table until he have openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former evil life, *that the congregation may thereby be satisfied*," &c. On the same ground rests the administration of the Common Law, since the judge can neither acquit nor condemn the accused without the previous verdict of the jury. Neither ought the governor to exercise his official power in pardoning the culprit after he is condemned, unless where he can do it in accordance with the general sentiment of the citizens, or at least on a petition addressed to him by persons of good standing for character and probity. And yet the judge is none the less a judge, and the governor is none the less a governor.

Now all this proves, not only the correctness of the principle as laid down in the language of Augustin,

and fully sustained by the practice of the primitive Church, but also its manifest incompatibility with the exercise of priestly power in the secret confession and absolution of the Roman system; for there the people are entirely cut off from any part in the administration of the keys, and the whole of this most serious and solemn prerogative of the Church of God is usurped by the priesthood, without the knowledge of the rest, and in the darkness and irresponsibility of perfect despotism. They call themselves judges, indeed, but no judge pronounces his decision in a manner like this. The administration of secular justice concerns not only the culprit, but the whole community; and hence a *secret tribunal* is perfectly abhorrent to the sense of all the world. And so it is in the case of the priesthood, who are judges in the Church. Hence the necessity of St. Paul's declaration to Timothy, "Those that sin *rebuke before all*, that others also may fear." Hence the maxims and the forms which governed the discipline of penitence in the primitive ages; and hence we are bound to brand the Roman Confessional as being, not the regulated exercise of judgment, but the wantonness of tyranny. True, indeed, it is, that their priests exercise it in such an accommodating way, that their subjects are relieved from the ancient restraints, and therefore are seldom disposed to complain of it. But that fact is no justification of their system. A well-managed and indulgent despotism may be a very popular government, and yet it is a despotism still.

Let us return, however, to the testimony of Augustin on the subject of the general confession of the Church in his day:

"Those are not our only sins which are called crimes, such as adulteries, fornications, sacrileges, thefts, robberies, false test-

imonies. To look upon any thing which you ought not, is sin; to hear willingly what ought not to be heard, is sin; to think any thing which ought not to be thought, is sin."—(*App.*, *Note* 78.)

"But our Lord, after that laver of regeneration" (baptism), "has given us other daily remedies. Our daily cleansing is the Lord's Prayer. Let us say, and say truly, because that itself is an alms-gift, *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. Give alms, and all things are clean to you.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 79.)

"Behold, the whole Church saith, *Forgive us our sins.* Therefore she has spots and wrinkles. But by confession the wrinkle is smoothed out; by confession the spot is washed away. The Church stands in prayer, that she may be cleansed by confession; and so long as she lives here, she thus stands. And when any one departs out of the body, all things are forgiven to him, if he had committed such sins as needed forgiveness; for they are even remitted by daily prayers: and then he will be cleansed, and thus the Church treasures up pure gold in the Lord's treasury, and by this means, in that divine treasury the Church is without spot or wrinkle."—(*App.*, *Note* 80.)

"Wherefore, on account of those sins which are human and tolerable, and so much the more frequent as they are smaller, God has constituted in the Church, during the time of obtaining mercy, the daily medicine of prayer, that we may say, *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors;* that our face being washed by these words, we may go to the altar, and our face being washed by these words, we may communicate in the body and blood of Christ."—(*App.*, *Note* 81.)

No proof can be more positive than this against the modern innovation of the Church of Rome, which, instead of retaining the principles and customs of the primitive Church, as they are expressly testified by the fathers, allows no one to communicate until he has gone through the hands of the priest, in the secret confessional.

The next passage which I shall quote is very strong and clear upon the true spirit of confession:

"Do not extol thyself above God; submit thyself to God; adore, prostrate thyself, confess to Him who made thee; for

no one can create again, but He who creates; no one makes again, but He who has made. Fly to thy Physician, implore thy Physician, who is omnipresent. Confess that from God thou hast all good things, but from thyself all that is evil. Do not despise Him and praise thyself in thy good things; do not accuse Him and excuse thyself in thy evil things; this is true confession. For thou hast a Priest through whom thou canst appease thy God, and He with the Father is God toward thee, who is man for thy sake. Thus thou wilt rejoice in psalms, coming before His face in confession. Rejoice in a psalm, coming before His face in confession. Accuse thyself; rejoicing in a psalm, praise Him. In accusing thyself, and praising Him who made thee, He will come who died for thee, and will revive thee."—(*App.*, *Note* 82.)

Here is the true force and efficacy of private confession, without the slightest allusion to any priestly intervention. The whole work is transacted between the sinner and the Lord.

But I proceed next to an interesting passage on the subject of the old rule, which allowed only one public penitence.

"Sometimes the iniquity of men proceeds so far, that even after the performance of penitence, after the reconciliation of the altar, they commit similar sins or greater. And yet God causes His sun to shine on such as these, nor does He grant them, any less than before, the largest gifts of life and salvation. And although, in the Church, the place of the humblest penitence is not conceded to them, nevertheless God does not forget His patience in their behalf. Hence, notwithstanding it may be cautiously and wholesomely provided that the place of this most humble penitence is granted but once in the Church, lest a medicine of little price might be less useful to the sick, seeing that it is the more salutary in proportion as it is the less contemptible, yet who may dare to say unto God, Why dost thou again spare this man, who, after one act of penitence, has again entangled himself in the snares of iniquity? Who may dare to pronounce that to these the saying of the apostle shall not be applied, *being ignorant that the patience of God leads thee to repentance?* Or that these must be excepted from the declaration of Scripture, *Blessed are all they that trust in Him?* Or that they have no part in the sentence, *Quit yourselves like*

men, and let your heart be strengthened, all ye who hope in the Lord?"—(*App.*, *Note* 83.)

It is easy to see, in this extract, that persons who had submitted themselves once to public penitence, and had afterward fallen away, were too commonly looked down upon with contempt, as utter reprobates; and that while Augustin would not plainly censure the established rule of the Church, which permitted only one allowance of public discipline in such cases, yet he felt it his duty to record his own charitable feelings with regard to them, and openly to declare that the Lord would not cast them off because their brethren had forsaken them.

There is an interesting passage in the sermon of Augustin on Matt., xviii., which next claims attention.

"*If thy brother sin against thee, go to him and reprove him, betwixt thee and him alone.* Wherefore? Because he has sinned against thee. What means this: He has sinned against thee? Thou knowest that he has sinned. But because it was in secret that he sinned against thee, seek secrecy when thou correctest the sin. For if thou alone knowest that he has sinned against thee, and yet wilt reprove him before all, thou art not only a reprover, but an informer. Observe how that just man, Joseph, notwithstanding he suspected his wife of such a grievous crime, spared her with such benignity: .... he wished rather to profit than to punish the sinner. Being unwilling to publish her, he intended to put her away privately .... Therefore, when thy brother has sinned against thee, if thou only knowest it, then truly he has sinned against thee alone."

"In the same manner we may act, and ought to act, not only when the sin is directed against ourselves, but when any one sins so that it is unknown to a third party. We ought in this case, also, to correct in secret, to reprove in secret; lest, by reproving publicly, we betray the man. We truly desire only to rebuke and correct; but what if an enemy seeks to hear that he may punish? The bishop, for example, knows that a certain man is a homicide, and no one knows it besides. I wish to rebuke him publicly, but thou seekest to prosecute him. Instead of this, I neither betray him nor neglect him: I reprove

him in secret; I place before his eyes the judgment of God; I alarm his blood-stained conscience; I persuade him to penitence. With this charity we ought to be endowed. Hence sometimes men censure us because we do not seem to reprove transgressors; thinking either that we know what we know not, or that we are silent about what we know. Perhaps, however, what thou knowest, I know also; but I do not rebuke before thee, because I wish to cure, and not to accuse. There are men who commit adultery secretly in their houses, and sometimes they are discovered to us by their wives, for the most part through jealousy, but sometimes from a solicitude for their husbands' salvation. We do not betray such openly, but rebuke them in secret. Where the evil happens, there let the evil die. Nevertheless, we do not neglect the wound; before all things, showing to the man accustomed to such a sin, and bearing a distempered conscience, that such a wound is mortal," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 84.)

Now the whole strain of this passage shows that there was nothing existing at the time like the confessional; for it is manifest that Augustin would never have thus recommended the advantages of a *voluntary* confidence in the priesthood, and the *expediency* of secrecy on the part of the clergy, if the rule of the Church already obliged every one to a full disclosure, and the priests were *bound* to keep silence by the ecclesiastical law. Neither could there have been any thing like a private absolution then administered, because the whole argument turns on the benefits of private counsel and rebuke; and not a word is intimated about the authoritative forgiveness of the sinner.

But here we may discern, nevertheless, the signs of the approaching change which, not long after, was advocated openly. It was, as we have seen, the effort of the ancient fathers to induce gross sinners to confess publicly, and submit to the appointed penitence as the only hope of having pardon for their sin. Now, however, we see Augustin advising secrecy

even in the case of the homicide and the adulterer. From this it is manifest that the Church had declined from her early system of discipline, and was preparing to bring in a more accommodating practice. And along with this, we find the same eminent father adopting two other principles, which are utterly false in themselves, although I am obliged to add that they form the basis of the modern Roman doctrine.

Thus he lays down the following maxims on the subject of penitential discipline:

"Sin must be punished; if it were not to be punished, it would not be sin. Prevent" (i. e., be beforehand with) "the Lord. Thou art not willing that He should punish, then punish thyself. Apply thyself to the punishment of thy sins, because sin can not go unpunished. Therefore it must be punished, either by thee or by Him; do thou confess it, that He may pardon."—(*App.*, *Note* 85.)

Now here Augustin advances a principle which, I am bound to say, is equally unscriptural and dangerous. It is true, indeed, that sin must be punished, else it would not be sin; and hence the necessity of that wondrous sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, on whom was laid "the chastisement of our peace," and "by whose stripes we are healed." But it is not true that *we* are told to punish our sins *in order that God may not punish them*, because His justice is satisfied by the all-sufficient atonement of the Saviour; and therefore, as I have already shown, in commenting on the cases of Job and David, the afflictions appointed to His people are not *punishments to satisfy our Almighty Judge*, but CORRECTIONS, administered for our improvement by the love of our heavenly Father. Hence the Scriptures nowhere command us to punish our own sins, but to repent and forsake them. It would be a strange plea to bring before an earthly court, that the sentence of the judge was already an-

ticipated by the criminal, who had condemned himself, and had, of his own accord, afflicted his body sufficiently. And far more derogatory to the majesty of divine justice would it be that the sinner should say to God, *O Lord, spare me the punishments which my sins have deserved, because I have been beforehand with thee, and have fasted, and wept, and worn sackcloth long enough, and thou oughtest to be satisfied.* Such an address would be nothing better than an act of presumptuous impiety; and surely the thought should not be encouraged in the heart, if it will not bear the process of translation into the language of prayer.

It is true, indeed, that the saints of old repented in dust and ashes; but this was the outward token of that inward sorrow which is inseparable from a true repentance, and was never confounded with the notion of a supposed commutation of punishment, addressed to the divine justice. Among the Oriental nations all deep grief was expressed in the same manner, as is conclusively shown by the mode in which they mourned for the dead, and bewailed the public calamities of their country. But the language of internal emotion should never be confounded with the idea of rendering an equivalent for sin. Instead of being addressed to the *justice* of God, our sorrow for sin is strictly addressed to His *pity and compassion*. From this false principle, however, thus advocated by Augustin, sprang all the corruptions of *satisfaction* to God as a part of penitence: a notion which is as derogatory to the office of Christ as it is delusive to the sinner.

Closely connected with this erroneous view of self-inflicted punishment, is another phrase which often occurs in the writings of Augustin, although its

commencement appears in other writers before his time.

"Bemoan thy sins to God, and, confessing them to Him, thou wilt MERIT from Him complacency."—(*App.*, *Note* 86.)

Here is the root of a dangerous delusion: salvation rather by the sinner's own works, than by the free grace of the Redeemer. It is true, however, that the word *mereor* does not always convey this meaning. The sentence might be correctly rendered, "thou wilt *obtain* from Him," which would be perfectly unobjectionable. And certainly this eminent father has many other passages which are quite orthodox on the point, as, for example, the following:

"How dost thou distinguish the vows which thou makest to God? In order that thou mayest praise Him, accuse thyself; because it is only of his mercy that he forgives our sins. For if he would act on the ground of our merits, he could not find any but those whom he condemns."—(*App.*, *Note* 87.)

Such declarations as this are a sufficient proof that the others were not intended to bear a different construction. And yet the Church of Rome has preferred the dangerous doctrine of human merit, and justifies it, as she supposes, by the one class of patristic authorities, while she overlooks the other.

I shall close the testimony of this celebrated bishop by an interesting acknowledgment of innovations in the Church, which indicates distinctly the melancholy fact of the progress of superstition, and prepares the mind for further developments of "will-worship" at a subsequent day.

"Whatever is instituted beyond the established custom, as if it were the observance of a sacrament, I can not approve; although there are many things of this sort which, to avoid the scandals of some pious as well as some disorderly persons, I dare not more freely censure. But I lament exceedingly, that many precepts, most wholesomely ordered in the sacred Volume, are lightly regarded, and so full of various superstitions have all

things become, that the man who should touch the earth with his bare feet on Sundays is more severely taken to task than he who buries his reason in drunkenness. Therefore all such matters, which are neither enjoined by the authority of the Holy Scriptures, nor found decreed in the councils of the bishops, nor confirmed by the custom of the universal Church, but which vary without end through the different fashions of different places, while the causes which have induced men to institute them can seldom or never be discovered, all such, in my opinion, should be cut off without any hesitation, where there is the power. For although it can not be found that they are against the faith, yet they oppress with servile burdens that religion which the mercy of God designed to be free in very few and most manifest sacraments of public celebration; so that the condition of the Jews is more tolerable, who, although they acknowledged not the time of liberty, are yet subjected to legal burdens, and not to human superstitions."—(*App.*, *Note* 88.)

Here we have a most instructive intimation of the innovating spirit of that age which so many imagine to have been perfectly pure, immaculate, and apostolical. The precepts of the Bible were neglected, while the inventions of men, without authority, the offspring of superstition, were observed with punctilious devotion. And so numerous and firmly established had these novelties already become, that Augustin himself was deterred from reproving them as plainly as they deserved, lest he might be exposed to scandal and reproach, not only from the lovers of disorder, but from some of the pious also. True, he does not consider that they were absolutely against the faith; but their tendency was hostile to it, since it is manifest that although the *form* of the faith might remain, yet the *principle* of faith was sure to suffer when the fancies of men began to be more reverenced than the precepts of God. It is totally impossible that the Gospel of Christ should take effectual root in any heart which fails to regard the Scriptures with supreme veneration.

CHAPTER X.

TESTIMONY OF THE ORIENTAL CHURCH.

THE sixteenth witness against the delusive system of the Romish confessional is one whose evidence is particularly interesting; and I shall cite it at large, as worthy of serious attention, since it presents the views of the Oriental Church upon the subject in a manner that ought to be conclusive, and on the unquestionable authority of Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian.

"At this time" (viz., A.D. 390) "it was resolved to abolish the office of the presbyters who presided over penitence, and that for the following cause. After the Novatians had withdrawn themselves from the Church, because they were unwilling to communicate with those who had lapsed during the Decian persecution, from that time the bishops added a presbyter of penitences to the ecclesiastical roll, in order that those who should sin after baptism might confess their sins before the presbyter appointed over that matter. And this rule remains among the other sects until now. Only the Homoousians, and those Novatians who agree in faith with them, have cast aside the presbyter appointed over penitences; for the Novatians truly, from the first, did not admit this addition. And the Homoousians, who now hold the churches, after they had retained this arrangement for a long while, at length abolished it in the time of the Bishop Nectarius, on account of a certain crime which had been committed in the Church. A certain noble woman, coming to the presbyter of penitence, confessed, one by one, the sins which she had committed after baptism. And the presbyter ordered her to use fastings and continual prayers for a season, by which she might exhibit, together with the confession of her sins, the work meet for repentance. In process of time the woman confessed another crime, namely, that a deacon of the Church was in the habit of committing fornica-

tion with her. When she had declared this, the deacon, indeed, was cast out of the Church, but the people began to be greatly excited; for not only were they indignant on account of the crime itself, but also because of the stain and infamy brought upon the Church in consequence. When, therefore, on this account, the clergy were assailed with jests, a certain presbyter, named Eudæmon, a native of Alexandria, persuaded the Bishop Nectarius that he should abolish the office of presbyter of penitence, and suffer every one to come to the communion at his own will, in the conscientious exercise of his discretion; for otherwise it was not possible that the Church should be free from all opprobrium."—(*App.*, *Note* 89.)

The testimony of Sozomen, another ecclesiastical historian, whom I shall set down as my seventeenth witness, corresponds with that of Socrates, and it may be as well to quote his statement also.

"At the same time, Nectarius, the bishop of Constantinople, first took away from the Church the presbyter who was placed over the penitents, whose example almost all the bishops afterward followed. What this was, and what was its origin, and for what reason it was taken away, others, indeed, may perhaps narrate differently. But I will say what I think. Since not to sin at all, belongs to a certain divine nature, superior to humanity, and God commands us to pardon penitents, even if they often sin; since, too, in asking forgiveness, it is necessary to confess the sin: it was justly esteemed by the priests, from the beginning, a serious and burdensome thing, that a man should divulge his crimes before the multitude of the whole Church, standing round as in a theater. Therefore they placed over this matter one of the presbyters who was most respectable for integrity of life, and excelled in taciturnity and prudence, to whom those that sinned came and confessed their deeds. And he, after pointing out, by way of punishment, what it was fitting they should severally either do or suffer, each for his own sin, absolved those who confessed, who were to exact from themselves the punishments of their crimes. But the Novatians, who have no rule of penitence, had no need of this arrangement. With the other sects, however, this custom remains to this day. In the Western Churches, however, and especially in the Roman Church, this custom is studiously observed. For there, in the open air, is a place for penitents, in which they stand sorrowful, and as if mourning. The so-

lemnities of the mass being ended, they who had been excluded from the communion of the mysteries which it is the custom to offer to the initiated, cast themselves prone on the ground with groaning and lamentations. Then the bishop, coming to them with tears, prostrates himself on the earth also, and the whole multitude of the Church, confessing together, is dissolved in tears. After this the bishop rises first, and lifts up the prostrate. But every one, in private, voluntarily macerating himself, either with fastings, or dirt, or abstinence, or in any other ways which may have been prescribed, waits the time fixed for him by the bishop. And when the day fixed arrives, as if a certain debt had been paid, he is freed from the punishment of his iniquity, and associated with the other members of the Church. *These customs are kept by the bishops of the city of Rome from the earliest period even to our own age. But in the Church of Constantinople a presbyter was appointed to preside over the penitents.* Until a certain noble matron, on account of the sins which she had confessed, being ordered by this presbyter to fast, and pray humbly to God, while for this purpose she remained in the Church, gave herself up to fornication with a deacon. The fact being known, all the people were inflamed with indignation, on account of the reproach brought against the Church, and the no small opprobrium to which the clergy were exposed. But Nectarius, after he had doubted much and long what was to be done in this emergency, displaced from the diaconate the man who had committed the fornication. And when some gave him counsel that he should grant liberty to every one, according as each individual was conscious of his own state, and had confidence in himself, to come to the communion of the holy mysteries, he abolished the office of the presbyter who had presided over penitence. And from that time this has remained firm and established; the old way, with the gravity and severity connected with it, being, as I think, by degrees fallen off into a loose and dissolute mode of living. For before this, as it seems to me, sins were less, as well on account of the shamefacedness of those who confessed their iniquities, as by reason of the severity of the judges who were appointed for that matter."—(*App.*, *Note* 90.)

Now the testimony of these two concurrent witnesses seems quite conclusive on the following points, viz.:

1. That the Oriental Christians introduced the plan

of private confession to the penitentiary presbyter at the end of the third century, for they expressly date it after the Decian persecution, and the rise of the Novatian schism.

2. That it was not like the more modern practice of the Romanists, because the facts of the case on account of which it was abolished prove that the penitentiary priest was expected to order all gross sins to be confessed openly; whereas, had he been *enjoined* (according to the system of the Church of Rome) to keep them secret, the scandal which made so much trouble could not have arisen. This is the only view of the matter which can account, in my mind, for the abolition of the office.

3. That at that time, A.D. 390, no such arrangement for private confession was known in the Western Churches, because Sozomen expressly contrasts their custom with that of the East, and describes the order of the Roman Church minutely and particularly, evidently for the purpose of showing the difference between them. And this is the more worthy of note, as it is manifest that he disapproved the judgment of Nectarius, and thought the institution of the private penitentiary priest had better been continued; and therefore he would naturally have strengthened his own opinion by stating that the practice of the Western Church accorded with the system of his choice, if he could have done so without violating the truth of history.

4. That the abolition of the private confessor by the bishop of Constantinople, and the ready concurrence of "almost all" the other Eastern bishops, at this first instance of scandal arising against the clergy, proves positively their conviction that the plan was nothing more than a human device, adopted at

first on the ground of expediency, and which, therefore, the experience of its inexpediency was a sufficient reason for doing away.

5. That of course they had no idea of its being connected with the true administration of the KEYS OF THE CHURCH, which remained perfectly secure, on the old basis of apostolic authority.

6. That in allowing every member of the Church to come to the communion at his own discretion, without any private consultation with the priest, they believed that they were only laying aside a dangerous innovation, and returning to the primitive rule. For otherwise, so sudden a change in discipline would hardly have been ordered by Nectarius, without the consent of a Council.

The attempt of Baronius to cast discredit on the testimony of Socrates, on the ground that he was one of the Novatians, only proves how conscious he was that the narrative is utterly hostile to the Romish assumption. But his statement is rejected by many learned and distinguished writers belonging to the papal communion, particularly by the eminent Valesius, who shows conclusively that there is no authority whatever for the imputation. Nor is it to be believed that two ecclesiastical historians, whose works have come down with credit to the present times, would have fabricated such a falsehood concerning a matter that happened in their own day, which must, from the nature of the case, have been perfectly notorious, and where a misrepresentation could only have served to call down upon themselves a storm of indignation, as wanton libellers of their Church and of their clergy.

My next evidence is furnished by a very celebrated personage, Chrysostom, the orator of the "golden

mouth," who succeeded Nectarius as patriarch of Constantinople. And his doctrine on the subject of repentance was precisely like our own, of which he has left so much on record that a volume might be extracted from his works, repeating the same substantial truth in a hundred forms. The following extracts will put the reader sufficiently in possession of his system, which was the system of all the Oriental churches of his day:

"He who, being corrected, hath deplored his sin, even while he wept, hath obtained pardon; for our compassionate Judge is contented with our tears alone."—(*App.*, *Note* 91.)

"Let us confess to Him a manifold confession.... Taking up the cry of the publican, who smote upon his breast and did not boast, like the Pharisee:.... What, then, did he say? *Be merciful to me a sinner.* Did he declare his sins in detail to God, as if He did not know them? Or could this flagitious publican, guilty of all that was evil, retain in his memory every thing committed by him since his birth? But he spake collectively and comprehensively, and exclaimed, There is nothing good in me which I can set forth, but I feel that I am all evil: I will confess to thee, the good God, who dost not punish those who confess, but deliverest those who flee to thee: be merciful to me a sinner. Let no one despair on account of his sins, let no one presume on his own merits."—(*App.*, *Note* 92.)

"When the Lord justifies, who can condemn? For Nathan said not to David, Wherefore *I* grant, but '*The Lord*,' saith he, '*hath taken away thy sin.*' And after these words, the prophet went to his house."—(*App.*, *Note* 93.)

"And thou, O David, forasmuch as thou didst commit adultery and murder, so thou didst repent and gain remission from God. For which reason thou publishest thyself, that whoever is an adulterer or a homicide, may learn that if, being converted, he should repent, he may obtain salvation."—(*App.*, *Note* 94.)

The beautiful homily of the publican and the Pharisee presents the doctrine of Chrysostom throughout in a most interesting manner. The following extract from it will suffice to show his views of con-

fession, both in its private form and in its public discipline:

"I do not lead thee to a theater of thy fellow-servants, nor do I compel thee to declare thy sins to men. Expose thy conscience to God; to Him show thy deeds and thy wounds, and from Him seek thy medicine. Exhibit thyself not to him who reproaches, but to Him who heals. For even if thou art silent, He knows all things."—(*App.*, *Note* 95.)

To estimate aright the force and frequency of Chrysostom's appeals on the subject of true and heart-felt penitence, we must remember that he was the successor of that Nectarius who had lately abolished the office of the penitentiary priest, and left every one free to come to the communion upon his own personal responsibility. There were some, as we find from Socrates and Sozomen, who disapproved this return to the primitive simplicity, and therefore Chrysostom, who appears to have cordially maintained it, loses no opportunity of explaining the subject in its real scriptural character, constantly endeavoring to bring his hearers to the Lord, and proving to them that it was with the great Searcher of hearts they had to do in the whole work of confession and forgiveness.

Our last three testimonies were from the Oriental Church, and now I return to the Western, in order to place before the reader some passages from the writings of Prosper of Aquitaine, who was distinguished as the follower of Augustin, in opposing the Pelagian heresy.

"Sweet to the Lord is the conversation of him that unfolds himself through an humble confession to God who knoweth, and to whom God reveals Himself as to one that knoweth not; and delight is the fruit of this conversation, for confession profits not when it is offered by him who glorifies himself, but when it is made to glorify God."—(*App.*, *Note* 96.)

"These things are uttered in the person of those who, be-

ing converted, pray for pardon; and their examples are commemorated, towards whom, though likewise sinners, the rich mercy of God has been manifest. Therefore this Psalm begins, like the other, *Confess ye to the Lord:* but there the words follow, *And call upon His name;* while here it is said, *For He is good, because His mercy endureth forever.* The confession of sinners, then, includes the praise of God; since he who seeks indulgence, ought to pray with hope, and with the praise of that mercy which he believes to be eternal."—(*App.*, *Note* 97.)

"The grandeur of the Lord toward us appears in this, that He justifies the sinner confessing without any preceding merits: that where sin hath abounded, grace may the more abound; by which grace confession itself is excited, that no one may be raised up in his own esteem, but that he who glories may glory in the Lord. For the confession of the sinner and the grandeur of the justification are both the work of God."—(*App.*, *Note* 98.)

"The confession of sin is good if the cure follows. For what doth it profit to uncover the wound, and not to apply the medicine?"—(*App.*, *Note* 99.)

"The confession of the penitent is most available with the mercy of God, whom the sinner, by confessing, renders propitious; whom, by denying, he can not make ignorant."—(*App.*, *Note* 100.)

"He runs well toward the remission of his sins who displeases himself. For with our just and merciful Judge, he who accuses himself, excuses."—(*App.*, *Note* 101.)

"Let the sinner forgive the sinner, and he will conciliate the Lord to show him equal favor. His judgment depends on our examination. What we sow, we reap; what we give, we receive."—(*App.*, *Note* 102.)

Thus we have advanced to the middle of the fifth century without meeting the slightest authority for the Romish confessional; the nearest approach to it being the Oriental practice, commenced toward the end of the third, and abolished, by general consent, on the authority of Nectarius, near the close of the fourth century. But now we come to an important step in a new direction, taken by the eloquent and popular Pope Leo the Great; and with this I shall commence the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

LATER LATIN FATHERS.

The primitive age of zealous purity and stringent discipline in the Church had passed away when the eminent Leo the Great became the Bishop or Pope of Rome. He found it difficult, and perhaps, as he supposed, impossible to bring back the ancient rules to their practical efficiency. He had, doubtless, been acquainted with the plan adopted in the Oriental Churches, and which, though now abandoned by them, was yet believed by some to have worked well for almost a century. And he seems to have thought that the introduction of a similar plan at Rome would relieve him from many difficulties, while yet he was conscious that it would not be more likely to endure at Rome than at Constantinople, unless it were so modified as to prevent the danger of public exposures on the one hand, and to increase the submission of the people to the priesthood on the other. Let us see, therefore, the terms in which this innovation was recommended by the authority of Leo.

"The manifold mercy of God so aids the lapses of humanity, that not only through the grace of baptism, but also through the medicine of penitence, the hope of eternal life is repaired, so that those who have violated the gifts of regeneration, condemning themselves by their own judgment, may arrive at the forgiveness of their crimes; the guards of the divine goodness being so ordered, that the pardon of God can not be obtained without the supplications of the priests. For the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, delivered this power to the presiding officers of the Church, that they should both pre-

scribe the act of penitence to those who confessed their sins, and when they were purged by wholesome satisfaction, should admit them to the communion of the sacraments by the door of reconciliation .... For it is very useful and necessary that the guilt of sinners should be absolved by sacerdotal supplication before the last day."—(*App.*, *Note* 103.)

"That presumption, also, against the apostolic rule, which, as I have lately heard, has been displayed by certain persons through illegal usurpation, I determine to have by all means suppressed, so that the confession of the kind of sins committed by individuals should not be published written in a little book, since IT SUFFICES THAT THE GUILT OF THEIR CONSCIENCES BE MADE KNOWN TO THE PRIESTS ONLY, IN SECRET CONFESSION. For although the plenitude of faith may seem to be laudable, which, on account of the terror of God, does not fear to blush before men, yet inasmuch as the sins of all are not of such a kind that those who ask for penitence are not afraid to publish them, let so unreasonable a custom be done away: lest many should be repelled from the remedies of penitence, either because they are ashamed, or because they fear that their deeds may be disclosed to their enemies, through whom they may be subjected to a legal prosecution. For that confession is enough, which is offered to God in the first place, AND THEN TO THE PRIEST ALSO, who intercedes as a suppliant for the sins of the penitent. And thus, finally, many may be stirred up to penitence, if the conscience of him who makes confession is not published in the ears of the people."—(*App.*, *Note* 104.)

Here, then, we see a direct blow given to the old system of public penitence; and the ground taken by Augustin, that secret sins should be rebuked secretly, is now extended in favor of the priestly prerogative on the one hand, and in favor of the fast growing dislike to public confession by the guilty on the other. But still the change, though very important, was only the first authoritative beginning of the new system. As yet, there was no law that *all* must confess to the priests before they could receive the communion. Neither do we hear, as yet, of any absolution distinct from the administration of the communion office. Nor were penitents in the Church

of Rome absolved first, and required to perform their penitential exercises afterward. Nor was there any attempt to order a priestly inquisition into the secret thoughts of those who came to confession. Nor were acts of penance enjoined by the priest, boldly pronounced to be a satisfaction to the justice of the Deity. Nor was the absolution of the priest extended beyond the language of prayer, that God would mercifully pardon and absolve the sinner. All these were the gradual work of future ages, as we shall see by and by.

My next evidence shall be taken from the writings of another eminent pope, Gregory I., surnamed, likewise, the Great, and particularly celebrated for having sent the monk Augustin to convert the Saxons, for opposing the title of universal bishop assumed by the patriarch of Constantinople, and for having labored to give what he supposed to be a better form to the music and the worship of the Church. My extracts will be numerous, and I trust they will prove interesting; but at least they will show that the confessional in the time of Gregory was far from the present standard of Romish doctrine, notwithstanding the wide departure which had taken place from the early discipline, as it was administered in the days of Tertullian and Cyprian. Referring to the authority committed to the apostles, Gregory saith:

"Of these, truly, the bishops, who have been chosen to the office of governors, now hold in the Church the power of binding and loosing.... But frequently it happens that the bishop, in binding and loosing his subjects, follows the motions of his own will, and not the merits of the causes. And hence it is that he deprives himself of this power of binding and loosing, because he exercises it not according to the morals of his subjects, but at his own will."

"Therefore the causes must be weighed, and then the pow-

er of binding and loosing is to be exercised. He must see what guilt has gone before, or what penitence has followed the crime, that those whom the omnipotent God visits through the grace of compunction, the sentence of the pastor may absolve; for then the absolution of the bishop is valid when it follows the sentence of the internal Judge. This is well signified by the resurrection of that man who had been four days dead, which manifestly demonstrates that the Lord first called and quickened, saying, *Lazarus, come forth;* and afterward, he who had come forth alive was loosed by the disciples, as it is written: *And when he came forth who had been tied with bands, then He said to His disciples, Loose him and let him go.* Behold, the disciples loose him who was already living, whom their Master had raised from the dead. For if the disciples should loose a dead Lazarus, they would exhibit an evil odor rather than power. From which consideration we may perceive that we ought to loose, by our pastoral authority, those whom we perceive that our Master has quickened by his awakening grace.... These things concerning the order of absolution I have briefly declared, that the pastors of the Church may take heed to loose or to bind with great discretion."—(*App.*, *Note* 105.)

"But we can not worthily exercise penitence unless we understand also the manner of its exercise; for to exercise penitence is both to bewail the evils we have perpetrated, and not to perpetrate again what we have bewailed. Since he who deplores his other misdeeds in such a manner that he nevertheless commits the same things again, either feigns penitence or is ignorant of its true nature."—(*App.*, *Note* 106.)

Now this doctrine of Gregory, if the Church of Rome could have remained content with it, would at least have been comparatively innocent and safe, since he here plainly shows that the bishops had no power to absolve the sinner, unless in those cases where Christ himself had already given life to the soul. But the next extract exhibits yet more strongly the contrast between his teaching and that of the Council of Trent.

A certain noble lady, named Gregoria, having desired that the pope would ask for a revelation to assure her that her sins were forgiven, he makes this pious and sensible reply:

"In that which thy Sweetness has added in thy letters, importuning me to write that a revelation has been made to me, assuring thee of the remission of thy sins, thou hast asked a thing not only difficult, but useless. Difficult, truly, because I am unworthy to receive such a revelation; and useless, because thou oughtest not to be made secure concerning thy sins, lest thou shouldst not be able to continue lamenting them to the last day of thy life. Assuredly, Paul the Apostle had already ascended to the third heaven; he had also been led into paradise; he had heard mysterious words which it was not lawful for man to utter; and yet, still trembling, he said, *I chasten my body and subject it to servitude, lest, perhaps, after preaching to others, I should myself become a reprobate.* Does he still fear who is already led to heaven, and is he not willing to fear who is yet conversant on earth? Consider maturely, most sweet daughter, that security is usually the mother of negligence. Therefore, in this life thou oughtest not to have security by which thou mightest be made negligent. For it is written, *Blessed is the man who is always fearful.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 107.)

How perfectly opposed is this to the Catechism of Trent! For there the Church of Rome teaches that, in order "to calm our solicitude, the Redeemer instituted the sacrament of penance, in which we cherish a well-grounded hope that our sins are forgiven us by the absolution of the priest, and the faith which we justly have in the efficacy of the sacraments has much influence in tranquilizing the troubled conscience, and giving peace to the soul. *The voice of the priest*, who is legitimately constituted a minister for the remission of sins, *is to be heard as that of Christ himself*, who said to the lame man, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."*

When Gregory the Great wrote to his noble correspondent that she could not have a revelation, and that she ought not to feel secure, how little idea had he of the marvelous change which a few centuries would accomplish in the doctrine of the Roman Confessional!

* See page 18.

In the same strain, however, this eminent pontiff states the true quality of absolution constantly. Thus, in a letter to the Proconsul Marcellus, he writes as follows:

"And since you have asked that our absolution may be given you, it is fitting that you should satisfy our Redeemer with tears and the whole intention of your mind for these things, as duty requires; because, if He be not satisfied, what can our indulgence or pardon confer?"—(*App.*, *Note* 108.)

One short extract more, and I shall close this writer's testimony.

"To exercise penitence truly, is to bewail what we have committed, and TO AVOID REPEATING WHAT OUGHT TO BE BEWAILED."—(*App.*, *Note* 109.)

Happy would it have been for the Christian world if the Western Church had remained firm at the point to which this matter had arrived in the age of the first Gregory. True, the ancient discipline at Rome had been, to a considerable degree, supplanted by private confession, and the penitent, in general, was only obliged to fulfill the secret directions of the priest in order to be restored. But still there was no enforcement of confession, and no inquisition of the thoughts; neither was there any obligation that all must confess preparatory to the sacrament; nor was the absolution in the indicative form, "I absolve thee," but in the form of prayer; nor had the priests dared to place themselves in the tribunal of their divine Master, by representing their judgment as the voice of Christ himself, according to the Trentine Catechism.

It may be well, however, to show still further the actual state of the matter during the age of Gregory, by some extracts from the forms of absolution, taken from the *Liber Sacramentorum* of this famous pontiff.

"Hear, O Lord, our prayers, and spare the sins of those who confess to thee; that those whom the guilt of their conscience

accuses, the indulgence of thy mercy may absolve. Through the Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 110.)

A second form is in these words:

"Let thy mercy prevent" (i. e., go before) "this thy servant, we beseech thee, O Lord; that all his iniquities may be blotted out by speedy forgiveness. Through the Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 111.)

A third form was used in reconciling the penitent, as follows:

"Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, to this thy servant, fruit worthy of penitence, that to thy holy Church, from whose integrity he has deviated by sinning, he may be restored blameless of the misdeeds he has confessed, by obtaining pardon. Through our Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 112.)

There are several curious and interesting examples of confession in the notes and observations of the learned Benedictine, Hugo Menard, appended to the Sacramentary of Gregory. But as they belong to a later period, I shall reserve them until I have considered the testimony of our next witness, Isidore, the bishop of Hispala. His evidence is important, not only because he was a man of great influence and piety, who expressed his opinions with remarkable clearness and precision, but also because his diocese, being in Spain, will afford us another variety in our sphere of investigation. The following extracts will place the reader in possession of his doctrine:

"Penitence is so called as if from punishment, because by it a man may punish in himself the evil he has committed; for those who repent truly do nothing else but this—that they do not suffer their misdeeds to go unpunished."

"And satisfaction is to exclude the causes and suggestions of sins, and not to commit them any more."

"But reconciliation is that which is performed after the penitence is fulfilled."

"Exomologesis is from a Greek word, which in Latin signifies confession; of which word there is a two-fold signification. For confession is understood either as a form of praise, as

where it is written, *I will confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth;* or when each one confesses his sins, in order to be forgiven by Him whose mercy is unfailing. From this Greek word, therefore, the term Exomologesis is commonly used to express the act in which we confess our guilt to the Lord."

"Moreover, the confession of error is the profession of discontinuance.... And confession goes before, remission follows; but he is without pardon who knows his sin, and refuses to confess it. Therefore, Exomologesis is the discipline of prostration and humiliation, in garments and in food, to lie in sackcloth and ashes, to defile the body with dirt, to abase the mind with sorrow."—(*App.*, *Note* 113.)

"And this penitence is according to the quality of our offenses; for as lighter sins are blotted out by secret prayer, so weighty sins are remitted before the Church through penitence and satisfaction."—(*App.*, *Note* 114.)

I have marked some further extracts from this author, which may exhibit his testimony yet more plainly.

"Penitence takes its name from punishment, by which the soul is tortured and the flesh is mortified. And, therefore, they who exercise penitence allow their hair and their beard to grow, that they may show" (by this emblem) "the abundance of those crimes by which the head of the sinner is weighed down.... That they must prostrate themselves in sackcloth (for sackcloth is a memorial of sins), is in allusion to the goats which shall be at the left hand of the Saviour. Hence, therefore, they who confess lie prostrate in sackcloth, and are sprinkled with ashes, to remind them that they are dust and ashes.... The Catholic Church confidently enjoins this remedy of penitence to exercise men in the hope of pardon after the one Sacrament of Baptism, which, in accordance with a remarkable tradition, she carefully prohibits from being repeated, and substitutes the aid of penitence as a medicinal remedy.... Only the dignity of honor is preserved, so that penitence is performed by the priests and Levites in the presence of God alone; but by the others with the priest standing solemnly before God, that a fruitful confession may cover whatever our rash appetite or the neglect of ignorance is known to have contracted; for, as in baptism all iniquities are remitted, and as we believe that sin is imputed to no one who suffers martyrdom,

in like manner, by the fruitful compunction of penitence, we may acknowledge all sins to be done away. For the tears of penitents with God are reckoned for baptism."—(*App.*, *Note* 115.)

"Although, through penitence, there is a propitiation for sins, yet no man ought to be without fear, because the satisfaction of the penitent is to be estimated not by human, but only by the divine judgment. For this reason, since the mercy of God is secret, it is necessary to weep without intermission. Nor, indeed, is it right that the penitent should ever have security concerning his sins; for security produces negligence, and negligence often brings the incautious back to his old transgressions." (*App.*, *Note* 116.)

"It is impossible that the sins of that man can be remitted who does not forgive the trespasses committed against himself. For God has justly made our own state the type of his indulgence to us, when he orders us to pray thus: *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 117.)

In this interesting evidence of Isidore we may observe a complete contrariety to the modern Romish system in several particulars.

1. That penitence is defined to be a punishment, *self-inflicted*, for our sins, according to the idea of Augustin. I have already stated my reasons for considering this an error; but, at all events, it proves that it had no relation to the penance imposed at the dictate of the priest, of which the Catechism of Trent says so much, while Isidore says nothing.

2. That satisfaction is defined to be, not the performance of a penance prescribed by the priest as a *compensation to the justice of God*, according to the Catechism of Trent, but the *forsaking* of the sins of which we have professed repentance.

3. That reconciliation, according to Isidore, comes *after* the fulfillment of penitence, whereas the modern Church of Rome absolves the penitent *first*, and expects him to fulfill his penitential works afterward.

4. That Isidore, like Augustin, mentions only two kinds of penitence, one private, for venial sins, and

the other public, before the *Church* (not the priest only), without any reference to auricular confession.

5. That the judgment of the priest was not then supposed to be the "voice of Christ," and therefore the penitent was told that he must sorrow to the close of life, because "the mercy of God was secret," and he could only *hope*, but without being perfectly *sure*, that he was forgiven. In this we have already seen that Gregory the Great agreed with him. But both are in plain contrariety to the Council of Trent, notwithstanding the Church of Rome would have us believe that she is infallible and unchangeable!

CHAPTER XII.

ANCIENT FORMS OF CONFESSION.

The learned Benedictine, Hugo Menard, in his Appendix to the Sacramentary of Gregory the Great, has paid particular attention to the forms of confession made by penitents from the sixth to the ninth century, in which it is worthy of note, first, that the confession is addressed to God alone, and not, as in the modern usage of Rome, to the Virgin and the saints also. And, secondly, that there is no specification of any sin, but a general acknowledgment of all sorts of iniquity. The extracts which I shall place before the reader will be acceptable, I trust, not only as exhibiting the progress of the system during those ages, but likewise as being a curious monument of antiquity. I quote the language of Menard, trans-

lated from the original, the first formulary being taken by him from the old *Ordo Romanus*, as follows:

"I confess to thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, and to thee, O good and most benignant Jesus, together with the Holy Ghost, before thy holy angels and before thy saints, before this altar and thy priest, that I have been conceived in sins, and born in sins, and brought up in sins, and have been conversant with sins from my baptism to the present hour. I confess, also, that I have sinned exceedingly in pride, in vain-glory, by self-exaltation in looks, in vesture, and in all my actions, in envy, in hatred, in covetousness of honor as well as money, in anger, in sloth, in gluttony, in sodomitish licentiousness, in sacrilege, &c. A similar form appears in the work of Goldastus, as in use among the ancient Germans."—(*App.*, *Note* 118.)

"The confession of S. Isidore, the bishop of Hispala, is also extant, recorded by Redemtus, one of his clergy, when, at the approach of death, he confessed openly in the house of S. Vincent; and this also is only general, expressing nothing in particular."—(*App.*, *Note* 119.)

"There is likewise extant the confession of Rotbert, bishop, sent in writing, just before his death, to the bishops who were at the siege of Angers with the Emperor Charles the Bald; in which, also, he confesses no special crime, but only professes himself to be an abominable and execrable sinner."—(*App.*, *Note* 120.)

"In a very ancient manuscript of the Library at Corbie, the title of which is *Ordo Orationum*, appears the confession of S. Fulgentius," which is subjoined at length, viz.:

"*Here begins the Confession of S. Fulgentius, Bishop, for the work of Penitence:*

"I confess to thee, O Lord, Father of heaven and earth, before this thy holy altar, and the relics of this place, and before this thy priest, all my sins, and all things whatsoever the compassion of God brings to mind of shameful thoughts, or idle and unclean words, and all that I have done against His commandment. I confess, likewise, all the vices of my heart and body, sacrilege, envyings, detractions, perjuries, thefts, evil-speakings, reproaches, foul speeches, scurrilities, lies, mockings, insults, deceits, murmurings, flatteries, moroseness, vigils useless and despicable before God, most grievous carnal lusts; and that I have set forth the precepts of God for the sake of the pampering and gratification of my own body, and have trangressed

through pride and self-exaltation, and negligence and sloth. I have perpetrated unclean purposes, and have committed fornications, pollutions, licentiousness, drunkenness, revelings, and homicides, openly and secretly, in body and in mind. To my father and my mother, my brothers and sisters, my uncles, aunts and cousins, or all other my kindred and relations, I have not exhibited the obedience of honor according to the commandment and will of God. To the carnal old man, and to those who were friends for evil more than for good, I have listened and been submissive. I have not loved all Christians as God hath commanded. I have offered and displayed at all times to others, not a good but an evil lesson and example. I have not observed nor kept worthily and acceptably unto God the Sundays and Saints' days; and I have not announced them to the ignorant, but I have defiled myself in them by intemperance and wantonness, and have incited others to the same. Robbery and theft I have hidden and partaken, and have consented to those who concealed them. I have not visited those who were sick and in prison. I have not covered the naked. I have not received strangers for the sake of God, nor washed their feet. I have not filled the hungry. I have not consoled the weeping and the sorrowful; those who were in open discord, and indeed all Christians, I have incited to anger rather than to peace. I confess that I have sinned much in seeing, in hearing, in tasting, in smelling, and in feeling; and I have conceived and perpetrated many evil things. I confess that in the holy Church I have thought much evil, and have spoken indiscreetly and proudly. In the holy Church I have stood, I have sat, I have kissed, I have beheld, I have covered, I have lain, I have consented. The holy vessels and every holy service, I have touched when polluted. I have been defiled with unlawful embraces. And upon the holy altar, and in the consecrated Church, and on the blessed cross, and upon the holy relics, I have sworn; and I have uttered perjured words and lies, and have committed perjury. I confess, also, that to thee, the Omnipotent God, and to all the saints, and to all good men, I have been disobedient, and within and without I have been unfaithful and offensive; contentious, hateful, envious, wrathful, avaricious, covetous, rapacious, unbelieving, unmerciful. And I have offered my prayer in the sight of God negligently, by reason of vain thoughts and a hard heart. The body and blood of the Lord I have received knowingly and unworthily, with my heart and body polluted, without confession and penitence. I have not

loved the Bishops, the worthy Abbots, the Monks, the Canons, and all the Clergy of the Church of God. I have not regarded them with affection, nor rendered them the obedience of honor, as God hath commanded. By carnal desires, and by evil thoughts, and by an evil will, and by evil works, I have contaminated, disgraced, and destroyed myself, and in will have consented to the devil. On account of all these and other things innumerable, which, by reason of the multitude of my sins, crimes, and iniquities, I am not able to remember; and because, against the will of God and of all the Saints, and against the Christian law, I have done and perpetrated them with a hard heart, whether ignorantly or knowingly, whether in evil thought, or in word, or in deed, or even with the industry and delight of sin, whether by day or by night, in hours or in moments, whether waking or sleeping, or from whatsoever cause I may have thought or willed to do, or actually perpetrated them against the will of God; therefore, this day I confess them all to thee, the God and Lord of heaven and earth, before thine altar, with a pure and true confession, and with a will to amend, and that these sins may thenceforward be remitted, that thou, O Almighty God, who hast said, 'I do not desire the death of the sinner, but that he may be converted and live,' mayest have mercy, and spare, and forgive, and blot out all my sins, crimes, transgressions, and iniquities, past, present, and to come, and mayest lead me to life everlasting: Amen. I beseech thee, O priest of God, that thou wilt be a witness to me concerning all these in the day of judgment; that my enemy may not rejoice over me; and vouchsafe to implore for me the mercy of God, that He may give me the favor of his pardon, and the remission of all my sins."

"*The Response of the Priest.*

"May the Omnipotent God have mercy on thee, and give thee a true pardon of thy sins, and avenge thee of all thy invisible enemies. May God give thee counsel in this life, and lead thee happily to life eternal."

"Thus far," continues the learned Hugo Menard, "is the confession of S. Fulgentius, Bishop. . . . . In the manuscript Codex of the Monastery of S. Remigius, situated at Rheims, there is another similar confession; but as the same form is in the *Ordo Romanus*, from which it differs in a very few words, it does not seem worth while to insert it here." The author, however, has set down a different form for the "*Response of the Priest*," as follows:

"May the Omnipotent God have mercy upon thee, and pardon all thy sins, deliver thee from every evil work, preserve thee in every good work, and lead thee, through the intercession of all the saints, to glory everlasting. Amen."—(*App.*, *Note* 121.)

From these specimens, it would seem that the private confessions customary in the sixth century and afterward were according to a minute and comprehensive form, embracing every imaginable sin, and yet avoiding any specification from which the penitent could be charged with particular acts of iniquity. The Apostle James had laid down the principle (ch. ii., 10), that "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." And perhaps it was on this ground that the priests of that age arranged these forms of confession, since it is difficult to suppose that any Christian man could be conscious to himself of all the sins enumerated by the eminent Bishop Fulgentius. But be this as it may, we see here several important points, in which the practice of that period differed evidently from the subsequent Romish system. For, 1st. Private confession was still voluntary, instead of being required as a regular prerequisite for the administration of the Eucharist. 2d. It was not under the seal of secrecy. 3d. It did not specify any particular sins. 4th. It was not addressed *to* any being but the Triune God, although it was delivered *before* the altar, the relics, the saints, and the priest. 5th. Absolution was sought directly from the Almighty. 6th. The priest was not asked to absolve, but to be a witness to the penitent's confession at the day of judgment, and to afford him the benefit of his prayers. 7th. The act of the priest, accordingly, was confined to the language of solemn prayer, without the imposition of hands, but the prayer was expressed in the optative form:

"May the Omnipotent God have mercy upon thee, and give thee remission of all thy sins," &c. It is true that this prayer differs little from those which were used in absolution. But we shall see, by later testimony, that absolution was accompanied by the imposition of hands, at least so far down as the ninth century.

It is plain, therefore, that the system was in a transition state, greatly changed from the primitive strictness and simplicity, while yet it was far from the mark which it afterward attained. This will be much more manifest, however, when I come to examine the remainder of the evidence furnished by our learned Benedictine, to which I shall proceed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

OTHER FORMS. TESTIMONY OF ST. BERNARD.

Proceeding with the evidence of the learned Benedictine, Hugo Menard, we find another interesting document in relation to our subject, which brings the practice of the Church down to the ninth century. It is taken from the Roman Penitentiary, as it was adopted and probably modified by the eminent Halitgarius, A.D. 816. And it is valuable not only as a monument of the rules enjoined at that time, but also as a complete proof that the confessional, in its present form, was even then altogether unknown in Christendom.

"This Halitgarius," saith our author, "was the Bishop of Cambray. He lived in the reign of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald, by the latter of whom he was sent to Constantinople on a mission to the Emperor Michael," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 122.) Then follows the work in question.

"*How Bishops and Presbyters should receive the Penitent.*

"Whenever Christians come to penitence, we prescribe fasting, and we ought to communicate with them in this fasting for one or two weeks, or as much as we can; that it may not be said to us, as it was said to the Jewish priests by our Lord and Saviour, *Woe unto you, lawyers, who oppress men, and put upon their shoulders grievous burdens, but ye yourselves do not touch these burdens with one of your fingers.* For no one can relieve his fellow falling under a load, unless he stoops down that he may extend his hand; neither can a physician cure the wounds of the sick, unless he partakes in the evil odor; so, likewise, no priest or pontiff can heal the wounds of sinners, or bear away their sins from their souls, unless by extreme solicitude and the prayer of tears.... Therefore let us also, if we see any one lying in sins, hasten to call him to penitence by our doctrine.... Thus, as we have said above, the bishops or the presbyters ought to humble themselves, and to pray with sorrow, with groaning, and with tears, not only for their own transgressions, but also for the transgressions of all Christians, that they may be able to say with blessed Paul, *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* For he who comes to penitence, seeing the priest sorrowful and weeping for his crimes, being more impressed with the fear of God, is more deeply grieved, and abhors his iniquities."—(*App.*, *Note* 123.)

"But if it happen that any one can not fast, and has the means of redemption, if he is rich, let him give twenty shillings for seven weeks; if he has not wherewithal to give so much, let him give ten shillings.... But if he be very poor, let him give three. And let every one attend to the object of his gift, which should be either for the redemption of captives, or an offering upon the holy altar, or to be expended on poor Christians," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 124.)

Next we have the prayers which the priest offers for the penitent before giving the absolution. The

following is one of the fullest forms, and they are all upon the same model:

"I supplicate, O Lord, the majesty of thy clemency and mercy, that thou mayest vouchsafe to this thy servant, confessing his sins and crimes, thy pardoning grace, and mayest forgive the guilt of his past transgressions, thou who didst bring back upon thy shoulders the lost sheep, and didst bend thine ear, pleased with the confession and prayers of the publican. Be also gracious to this thy servant, O Lord; kindly assist his prayers, that he may continue appeasing thee by his confession. Let his weeping and his supplication speedily obtain thy perpetual clemency, and, being restored to thy holy altars and sacrifices, let him again be subject to the hope of thine eternal and celestial glory. Through the Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 125.)

"*Prayer of the Imposition of Hands.*

"O holy Lord, Almighty Father, eternal God, who through Jesus Christ, thy Son our Lord, hast deigned to heal our wounds, we thy suppliants beseech thee, and we thy humble priests implore thee, that thou wouldst vouchsafe to incline the ear of thy pity to our prayers, that thou wouldst remit all the crimes and pardon all the sins of this thy servant, and give him pardon instead of punishment, joy instead of sorrow, life instead of death. He has fallen from his celestial dignity, yet, confiding in thy mercy, let him be accounted worthy to attain the bountiful peace and heavenly gifts of thy recompense, even to life everlasting. Through the Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 126.)

"*Here begins the Reconciliation of the Penitent.*

"First, he repeats the 50th Psalm, with the Antiphon, *A clean heart.* O God! thou most benignant Creator and merciful Reformer of mankind, who, in the reconciliation of the fallen, hast been willing to save even me, that chiefly need thy mercy; grant that, by the effects of thy grace through the sacerdotal ministry, the merit of thy suppliant ceasing, the clemency of the Redeemer may become the more marvelous. Through our Lord."

"O omnipotent and everlasting God, loose through thy compassion the sins of this thy servant confessing them to thee, that the guilt of his conscience may not hurt him in punishment, more than the pardon of thy compassion may comfort him with forgiveness. Through the Lord."

"*Another.*

"Almighty and merciful God, who hast placed the pardon of sinners in a speedy confession, succor those who have fallen, have pity on those who have confessed; that what the chain of their iniquities has bound, the greatness of thy compassion may absolve. Through the Lord."—(*App.*, *Note* 127.)

After these forms, we have an exact detail of canonical penance laid down at great length, commencing as follows:

"*Here beginneth the Judgment of the Penitent.*

"If any bishop or other ordained person shall commit homicide . . . let him do penance during ten years; three of which shall be on bread and water. If a layman, let him do penance for three years; one of which shall be on bread and water," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 128.)

The document proceeds to specify the discipline appointed for adultery, perjury, theft, sorcery, sacrilege, and many other crimes, all of which have their periods of penitence assigned in the same manner. To these is added another list of various minute offenses, provided for with equal precision, and leaving very little to the discretion of the priests. The whole of this is plainly derived from the old canons of public penance, and there is no allusion throughout to any rule or injunction of secrecy. Thus we see that, so late as the ninth century, the penitential discipline of the Gallic Church was in a very different condition from that which the papal system now imposes. For, first, it was applied not to all, but only to gross offenders. Secondly, the confession was made to God, without any mention of the Virgin or the saints. Thirdly, it was purely voluntary. Fourthly, the priests were bound to fast and weep along with the offender. Fifthly, although the first confession might be made before a single bishop or priest, yet the reconciliation and absolution were administered by sev-

eral, as is plainly indicated by the plural form in the prayers. Sixthly, the absolution was in the form of prayer, instead of the modern positive and judicial assumption, "I absolve thee." Seventhly, the reconciliation was by the imposition of hands. Eighthly, the penance was not left to the secret discretion of a single priest, but was laid down from the Canons. Ninthly, there was no injunction of secrecy.

But I shall now pass to the early part of the twelfth century, and consider the aspect of confession as it appears in the writings of the famous St. Bernard.

This eminent man was the Abbot of Clairvaux, and the great and influential spirit of his day, throughout the whole of western Christendom. His reproof was dreaded by popes and cardinals. His influence was powerful enough to stir up a crusade. His authority was sought for in every dispute and controversy. His name, notwithstanding the long period which had intervened, was associated, by general consent, with the great lights of the Church, and he was reverenced as the last of the fathers. Let us listen, therefore, to his doctrine on the general subject of penitence and confession, and see how it agrees with the modern system of the Church of Rome. Thus he speaks:

"I will pour out all my miseries before God, if haply His great compassion may move Him. I will confess my sins to Him, to whom all things are naked and open; whom I can not deceive, because He is Wisdom; whom I can not escape, because He is every where. Hear, therefore, O most compassionate God, hear my confession, and have respect to thy pity, and do with me according to thy mercy."—(*App.*, *Note* 129.)

There is no allusion to the priest in this author's numerous statements on the subject of penitence, but they are all in the same strain as the foregoing, recalling the language of Augustin, Chrysostom, and Isidore. Thus, while the Catechism of Trent tells

us of the peace and ease which auricular confession produces to the conscience, and directs the penitent to hear the voice of the priest as he would hear the voice of Christ himself, saying, "Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee," Bernard enjoins the very contrary, as follows :

"Because the mercy of God is secret, it is necessary to weep without intermission. Hear, therefore, my dearest sister, the words of blessed Isidore : 'It is not right that the penitent should have security concerning his sins.' Why ? Because security begets negligence, and negligence often brings the incautious man back to his former sins."—(*App.*, *Note* 130.)

Nothing can show more clearly the novelty of the present Romish system than this. It is precisely the same doctrine which we have already quoted from Gregory the Great, Isidore, and others. But here, so late as the twelfth century, we have the very argument by which Rome recommends the secret tribunal of the priest, selected, in the judgment of Bernard, as a subject of condemnation.

My next extract from our author will show a plain contrariety to another dangerous falsehood of the Catechism of Trent, viz., that one may satisfy the divine justice for another : a doctrine which is closely allied to the Roman figment of works of supererogation. Commenting on the parable of the Ten Virgins, Bernard thus cites the language of the five foolish virgins :

"Give us (say they) of your oil. A foolish petition. The just man will scarcely be saved, and hardly even to the saints does the oil of their righteousness suffice for salvation ; how much less both to themselves and to their neighbors ? Noah, Daniel, and Job will not deliver their son, but even as the soul which sinneth it shall die, so the soul which doeth righteousness will alone be saved."—(*App.*, *Note* 131.)

In the forms which Bernard has left for private confession (p. 400), as well as in the extracts select-

ed from his works, called *Flores D. Bernardi*, or "The Flowers of the divine Bernard," the subject is treated without the slightest allusion to auricular confession or priestly absolution. The whole is addressed to the Redeemer alone, and there is no address to saint, angel, the Virgin mother, or the sacerdotal judge. And thus the matter appears to have stood, saving only in the discipline of canonical penances, until the sweeping revolution of the Council of Lateran in the next century, backed by the angelic doctor, Thomas Aquinas, and the other schoolmen, overturned the primitive rule and established in its stead a new system of error and delusion.

Closing at this point the evidence of the fathers, I shall now go back to A.D. 250 and examine the Councils, in order to trace, by this most authoritative kind of testimony, the various steps of the doctrine and discipline of the Church on the subject under consideration.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE COUNCILS.

The oldest Council which has come down to us is that of Carthage, held under the celebrated Cyprian, A.D. 252, and the synodical epistle is the only record of its acts. It speaks of penitence, as required of those who had lapsed in time of persecution, in the following terms:

"That those who had been overthrown by the adversary, or had lapsed in the troublous times of persecution, and had stained

themselves by unlawful sacrifices, should perform full penitence for a long while; but if the danger of sickness should require, they might receive peace under the stroke of death" (that is, they might be reconciled and receive the communion on their death-bed). "For it was not right, nor was it permitted by the paternal clemency and divine compassion, that the Church should be closed against those who were knocking; that the support of saving hope should be denied to those who were grieving and beseeching; that those who were departing out of the world should be dismissed without the communion and peace of the Lord, when He who gave the law had granted that *whatsoever things were bound on earth should be bound also in heaven;* and that there, also, those things might be loosed which had first been loosed in the Church."—(*App.*, *Note* 132.)

It does not appear that any precise times of public penitence were yet appropriated to particular sins, but it was left to the discretion of the Church, under the counsel of the bishop and the clergy, to determine each case as it occurred, according to the best judgment which they could form of the intensity of the penitent's sorrow for his guilt, and the signs which he exhibited of a true conversion. Hence we have seen the exhortations of Tertullian and the other fathers, that the penitent should not spare himself, nor omit to supplicate his brethren with tears, and even prostration at their feet, that they might take pity on his misery, and shorten the period of his separation.

The first effort to reduce the administration of penitential discipline to a system seems to have been that of the Council of Elvira, in Spain, A.D. 313, to which I have already alluded.* At this Council, nineteen bishops and twenty-six presbyters, in the presence of the deacons and the people, adopted a kind of canonical code, specimens of which have been given as above, and need not be here repeated. Thus, if any Christian partook of idolatry, he should be ex-

* See page 98–99.

communicated for life; and the same punishment was allotted to many other sins. If a mistress beat her slave so cruelly that death ensued, she should perform penance for five or seven years, according to the circumstances. If a man became a heretic, and then desired to return to the Church, he should be a penitent for ten years, before he could be admitted again to the communion, &c.

The great Council of Arles, called together by the Emperor Constantine, A.D. 314, and said by some of the fathers to have consisted of 600 bishops, passed several canons defining the causes for which offenders should be excommunicated, but without specifying any number of years, and therefore leaving the length of their penitence to the particular Church with which they were connected.

The system commenced by the Council of Elvira, however, once begun, soon extended itself throughout the Church, as may be seen by reference to the following:

The Council of Ancyra,	consisting of	18	bishops,	A.D. 314.
The Council of Neocesarea,	"	16	"	A.D. 314.
The General Council of Nice,	"	318	"	A.D. 325.
The Council of Gangra,	"	16	"	time uncertain.

The Council of Antioch, reckoned by some to have consisted of 30, and by others of 97 bishops, A.D. 341.

The Council of Sardis, variously reckoned at from 29 to 300 bishops, while the Synodical letter, differing from both, exhibits 60 names. This important Council was holden A.D. 347.

The Council of Laodicea,	consisting of	22	bishops,	A.D. 372.
The Council of Valentia,	"	30	"	A.D. 374.
The Council of Cæsar Augusta,	"	12	"	A.D. 380.
The Council of Hippo,	"	217	"	A.D. 393.

With many others, portions of which will be cited at large, as our work advances.

The General Council of Nice, A.D. 325, holds a superior rank among the early Councils, and the twelfth canon has been already cited.* To this I will now add

* See page 99–100.

the eleventh canon, which will clearly exhibit the character of public penitence at that day, specially in reference to the case of those who had "lapsed" by offering a heathen sacrifice during the period of persecution.

"Concerning those," saith this canon, "who have transgressed without necessity, or without the loss of their property, or without danger, or any thing of this kind, which was done under the tyranny of Licinius, it pleased the Council, although they may be thought unworthy of indulgence, to show, notwithstanding, some benevolence in their behalf. Whoever, therefore, shall manifest their penitence truly, let them remain for three years among the believing hearers, and prostrate themselves with all contrition for six years, and then for two years they may communicate in prayer with the people without an oblation."—(*App.*, *Note* 133.)

It is observable, that the whole code of these penitential canons contemplates the publicity of the discipline to which the culprit was obliged to submit On the part of the Church, indeed, he was only put out of communion, according to St. Paul, who directed the same course with respect to the incestuous Corinthian. On his part, however, it was incumbent on him, if he was actually penitent, to seek for readmission, by deep contrition and reformation, to the favor of God; and to endeavor, by convincing his brethren of his sincerity, to obtain his restoration to the communion of the Church, and to the means of grace provided for the faithful. But, in the very nature of the case, this process could not be secret; for he could not be placed in the condition of a penitent until he was first put out of the communion. The whole congregation, therefore, were necessarily apprised of the fact. And although his pride might revolt at the acknowledgment of his offense, and much more at the continued manifestation of his abasement, yet it was infinitely better that he should submit to it all for a

portion of his present life, than risk the condemnation of the Lord at His coming to judge the world.

The Church of Rome can not deny this system of public penitence, and does not attempt it, for the proofs are too numerous and strong. But she would fain persuade her deluded followers that the system of her secret auricular confession and absolution existed along with it, and was used in all cases where the sin was secret: public penance being required for public crimes, and private penance, at the secret dictation of the priest, being exacted for all others. And the hypothesis is certainly ingenious, although it is not only at variance with the Word of God, but quite irreconcilable with the testimony of antiquity. This I have already proved from the fathers, and I shall now proceed to prove it from the Councils by necessary implication.

Thus the third Council of Carthage, held by forty-six bishops, A.D. 397, furnishes the following evidence against auricular confession, in its twenty-fifth canon.

"That the clergy or the continent" (that is, those who were under the vows of celibacy, which had become customary from the commencement of the fourth century, and, in some quarters, at a still earlier period)—"that the clergy or the continent may not approach widows or virgins unless by the command or permission of the bishops and presbyters. And then they may not do it alone, but in company with their fellow-clergymen, or with such as the bishop or presbyter may have directed; *nor may even the bishops or presbyters themselves have access alone to females of this sort, but either where the clergy shall be present or some serious Christians.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 134.)

Now here we see a positive prohibition, even to bishops and presbyters, against being alone with a virgin or a widow. And the Council makes no exception for any case whatever. But the Church of Rome *requires* her priests to be alone with every widow and virgin, for the purpose of auricular confession, before

they can receive the sacrament. Nothing can show more clearly that the bishops who passed this canon could have had no idea of the modern doctrine, which is yet audaciously said to have existed from the apostolic day.

The same Council, in its thirty-first canon, furnishes another proof against the Roman claim, by requiring the bishops to decide upon the times of penitence, viz.:

"That the periods of penance may be prescribed to penitents at the discretion of the bishop, according to the difference of their sins."—(*App.*, *Note* 135.)

This regulation agrees well with the discipline of public penitence, where the transgressors would always be a very small minority of each congregation. But it would be totally impossible for the bishop to dictate the times of individual penance upon the modern plan of Romanism, where the case of every man, woman, and child in the diocese would have to be considered.

The thirty-second canon of this council affords us another demonstration in these words, viz.:

"That the presbyter shall not reconcile the penitent without consulting the bishop, unless when the bishop is absent and necessity compels. And when the crime of any penitent is public and most notorious, so that the whole Church knows it, let him receive the imposition of hands before the chancel."—(*App.*, *Note* 136.)

The meaning of this is plain. By the first clause, if the bishop was absent, and *necessity compelled* (which could only be in the case of sickness), the priest might reconcile the penitent without consulting the bishop. The second clause, however, seems intended to guard against all private absolutions in important and serious cases, where the sin was especially offensive and notorious, and where, for that rea-

son, the feelings of the whole congregation were more than commonly engaged; for in such cases neither priest nor bishop was allowed to reconcile him in private, however great the necessity, and the act could only be performed by bringing the penitent publicly before the Church, thereby securing the knowledge and consent of the people. How perfect a contrast does this present to the modern Roman practice, where the priest acts without consulting his bishop, under the bond of absolute secrecy, and the penitent never receives the imposition of hands at all to mark his reconciliation.

The fourth Council of Carthage, held by two hundred and fourteen bishops, A.D. 398, set forth several canons, which are equally inconsistent with the present Roman system, viz.:

CANON LXXIV.

"The priest shall enjoin the laws of penitence on every one who implores penitence, without respect of persons."—(*App.*, *Note* 137.)

CANON LXXVI.

"He who asks for penitence in sickness. . . . . if he is thought to be immediately about to die, shall be reconciled by the imposition of hands, and the eucharist may be placed within his mouth. If he shall survive . . . . . let him be subjected to the established laws of penitence as long as the priest who gave him penitence shall approve."—(*App.*, *Note* 138.)

CANON LXXVIII.

"Penitents who receive the Viaticum of the Eucharist in sickness, if they survive, must not believe themselves absolved without the imposition of hands."—(*App.*, *Note* 139.)

All these provisions of the primitive Church have been done away by the Church of Rome, notwithstanding her confident boast that she adheres, unchanged and unchangeable, to the ancient system. We shall see in due time how the lapse of five centu-

ries introduced an express order to accommodate the laws of penitence to the rank of the individual, instead of administering them to all alike, "without respect of persons." And whereas the two hundred and fourteen bishops of the fourth Council of Carthage held that no one should be absolved *without* the imposition of hands, the Roman Church now allows no one to be absolved *with* it. But it is especially worthy of remark that this Council would not dispense with the laws of public penitence, even when the penitent had been absolved upon his supposed death-bed; since, if he recovered, he was obliged to go through the whole prescribed course under the priest's direction. This is conclusive to prove that so late as the close of the fourth century there was no allowance of private absolution, except in the single case of impending dissolution, which was a claim of extreme necessity. Instead of which, the Church of Rome enjoins private absolution in all cases, and practically uses no other.

I come now to the commencement of the fifth century, when the first Council of Toledo, held by nineteen bishops, in their second Canon, set forth a definition of the word Penitent, which clearly shows the meaning attached to it in the discipline of Christian antiquity.

"It was decreed, also, that no penitent may be admitted to Holy Orders, except only that, if necessity or utility should require it, he may be appointed among the door-keepers, or among the readers, but so that he may not read the Gospels or the Epistle. . . . . And by this word Penitent we mean him who, after baptism, having performed public penitence in sackcloth, either for homicide or for various other very grievous crimes, shall have been reconciled to the divine altar."—(*App.*, *Note* 140.)

This proves plainly the order of the matter at that time, in precise accordance with the testimony of the

fathers. Private penitence, which was required of all men for their daily sins, was a duty to be performed to God; and here the rules of confession and reconciliation, laid down in reference to the Church and the priesthood, had no application whatever. But for the grosser sins, such as murder, adultery, fornication, theft, perjury, &c., public penitence was enjoined and strictly enforced. The modern Roman system entirely confounds these distinctions; on the one hand, compelling all without exception, however clear of gross sin, to confess secretly to the priest and receive his private absolution; while, on the other, the vilest criminal receives the same absolution, and his secret of guilt is kept, and he is admitted to the Eucharist; when the primitive Church would have separated him for years together from the communion of the faithful, and would not have restored him even then, unless he had publicly bewailed his sins in sackcloth and ashes, and the people, as well as the bishop and the priests, were satisfied that he had become thoroughly reformed.

But let us pass over the next four centuries, and see what evidence is afforded of a tendency to change and corruption in this important question of discipline. And here we come to the Council of Chalons-sur-Saone, A.D. 813, where we meet with this distinct acknowledgment of degeneracy:

"The exercise of penitence, according to the ancient constitution of the Canons, has fallen into disuse in most places, and neither in excommunicating nor in reconciling is the order of the old practice preserved."—(*App.*, *Note* 141.)

This is a truly important and conclusive acknowledgment, and applies to the whole question in controversy. For if there had been any thing like the present Romish system in the primitive Church, and

that had continued in purity and vigor, it would have been supposed to suffice *then*, as it is supposed to suffice *now*, and the Council could not have passed such a judgment against the change which had taken place, without some favorable notice of the private priestly confessional.

Instead of this, however, the same Council proceeds, in the sixty-first Canon, to pass a law which is manifestly aimed against the liberties taken by the clergy in their private intercourse with the nuns. It is as follows, viz.:

"The nuns ought not to eat or drink in their own houses with any males, whether clergy or laymen, kindred or strangers. And it may not be lawful for them to converse with any male, unless in the Auditory" (or the common parlor), "and there only before witnesses."—(*App.*, *Note* 142.)

The same restrictions appear in a large number of other Councils, plainly showing the encroachments of a relaxed and dangerous state of morals, the sad consequence of the efforts so insanely directed against the marriage of the clergy, and the exaltation of celibacy among monks and nuns. Thus, in the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, held A.D. 816, the following directions are prescribed to the priesthood:

"If, in the performance of clerical duty, either a widow or a virgin is visited, never enter the house alone, and take such companions as may not disgrace thee by their company. Do not sit alone with any female, secretly, and without referee or witness. If any thing more private is to be said, she has her nurse, or steward, virgin, widow, or married woman; she can not be so unsociable that there is no one beside thee to whom she ventures to trust herself. Beware of all suspicions; and whatever may be imagined with probability, avoid beforehand, lest it may be supposed."—(*App.*, *Note* 143.)

"As for the presbyters, whose duty it is to celebrate the solemnities of the mass in convents of women, let there be a place and a church, outside of the convent, where they may dwell with their assistants, and perform the divine service; and let

them not enter the convent of girls except at the set time, and along with them shall be a deacon only and a sub-deacon, who are eminent for honesty of life, and desire to love, not themselves, but Christ, and who seek not their own, but the things of Jesus Christ; and let them not remain there longer than may be required for the public celebration of the mass for the nuns. Which being rightly and devoutly celebrated, let them go out immediately. . . . And let the nuns beware that no one of them hold any familiar conversation with those presbyters or with their ministers. If any of them wishes to confess her sins to the priest, let her do it in the church, that she may be seen by others, as it is directed in the precepts of the holy fathers; except the sick who are compelled to do it in their houses. But let the presbyter, in order to avoid detraction, have with him a deacon and sub-deacon, who are truly of good fame, by whom he may be seen, and a good report may be given of his innocence.—(*App.*, *Note* 144.)

Here we see not only that a change was made, but that the relaxation of the ancient strictness of penitence, united to the unnatural restraints of clerical celibacy, had given rise to a state of morals so corrupt, that a priest is forbidden to be alone with a female who wished to confess her sins, lest he should be accused of iniquity. The very passage of such canons by councils of bishops proves the degenerate state of the Church in the plainest manner. But we do not find this allowance of private confession universal even at this time, for the greater number of the Councils restrict the intercourse of the priests with nuns, without any such exception. Thus an important Synod, held A.D. 878, passed the following canon:

"That the bishop shall frequently visit the monasteries of the monks and the nuns, along with some grave and religious persons, and, residing in their convent, shall examine their life and conversation; and if he find any thing reprehensible, shall sedulously endeavor to correct it. He shall also closely investigate the chastity of the nuns. And if any be found who, their purpose of chastity being neglected, shall have held intercourse immodestly with any cleric or layman, let her be thrust into pri-

vate confinement, where she may repent worthily of her evil deeds. Let him also forbid, by the authority of the holy canons, that any layman or cleric shall have access to their cloisters or private rooms; neither shall the presbyters be admitted, except only to the mass; and the mass being over, let them return to their own churches."—(*App.*, *Note* 145.)

Here the priests are only allowed to enter the convents for the performance of the public service of the mass, and no liberty is given, as in the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, for any private acts of confession. The system, however, was growing, and at length became universal, though not without reiterated struggles and protests, which were all in vain.

The same prohibitions meet us again in the synodical Constitution of Riculf, the Bishop of Soissons, A. D. 889, and in the most revolting form, indicating a truly shocking state of moral corruption, viz.:

"Let no presbyter enter into idle conversation with a woman alone. . . . But we likewise say that they must beware of mothers, aunts, sisters, and kindred; lest, perchance, that may happen which is read in Scripture concerning Amnon and Lot." I leave the full passage in the words of the original Latin.—(*App.*, *Note* 146.)

I pass over somewhat less than a century, and find the progress of the Confessional going on toward its maturity, although it was still left voluntary, and not demanded as a necessary prerequisite for the administration of the Eucharist. A very full view of the matter at this time may be had in the Ecclesiastical Laws of King Edgar, drawn up by the stern and thoroughly monkish spirit of Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 967. And it may be well to make a large extract from this code for the reader's satisfaction.

"*Of Confession.*

"When any one desires to make confession of his sins, let him act the man, and not blush to acknowledge his crimes and

wickedness by accusing himself; because hence comes pardon, and because there is no forgiveness without confession; for confession heals, confession justifies."—(*App.*, *Note* 147.)

The directions to the confessor are as follows:

"Interrogate him" (the penitent) "concerning his morals; force out of him his crimes, and set before him all things which he has done, but always taking care in thyself that thou must never judge in the same manner the rich and the poor, the freemen and slaves, the old and the young, the well and the sick, the humble and the proud, the strong and the weak, the clergy and the laity. A prudent judge will distinguish prudently concerning the fact, namely, what has been perpetrated? how, where, and when? For the greater the power and dignity of the sinner, the more heavily he should be corrected for his sins before God and men."—(*App.*, *Note* 148.)

Next follows the form of confession to be uttered by the penitent (besides the special sins, with time, place, and circumstance), in these words, viz.:

V.

"I confess to Almighty God, and to my confessor and spiritual physician, all the sins which, by the defilement of evil spirits, I have ever committed; whether in deed or in thought, with males or with females, or any other creature, whether according to nature or against nature."

VI.

"I confess gluttony in food, both morning and evening. I confess every kind of avarice, and envy, and detraction, and double dealing, and lying, and empty boasting, and vain speaking, impious prodigality, and pride of whatever sort which may have happened in any manner to this my unbridled body. I confess that I have frequently been the author of sin, the promoter of sin, the witness of sin, and the teacher of sin."

VII.

"I confess that in my mind I have been guilty of homicide, perjury, sedition, pride, and neglect of the precepts of God. I confess all things which I have ever seen with my eyes, either unlawfully lusting or disdaining; likewise all vain and superfluous things which I have either heard with my ears or spoken with my mouth."

VIII.

"I also confess all the sins of my body, of my skin, of my flesh, of my bones and nerves, of my reins and cartilages, of my tongue and my lips, of my jaws, teeth, and hair, of my marrow, and any other thing whatever, whether it be soft or hard, wet or dry. I confess that I have observed my baptism worse than I promised to my Lord, and the profession which I was bound to keep to the praise of God and of his saints, and to my own eternal salvation. I confess that I have often neglected my canonical hours, and more often still, being forsworn, have taken the life and the name of the Lord in vain."

IX.

"I ask and implore of my Lord remission of all these, that the devil by his snares may never prevail against me, lest perhaps I die without confession and amendment of my sins; even as this day I have confessed all my sins before our Lord and Saviour Christ, who governs heaven and earth, and before this holy altar, and these relics, and before my confessor, the mass-priest of the Lord; and even as I have pronounced a pure and true confession, and am of ready mind to correct all my sins, and always hereafter to avoid them with as much care as I can."

X.

"And thou, O Jesus Christ my Saviour, have compassion on my soul, and remit, I beseech thee, and blot out my sins and my transgressions which I have ever perpetrated, either formerly or recently, and lead me into thy kingdom on high, that there I may abide with thine elect and holy ones without end throughout eternity. And now I humbly beseech thee, O priest of the Lord, that thou mayest be a witness to me in the day of judgment, that the devil may have no part in me, and that thou mayest be my advocate with God; that I may correct my sins and the trangressions I have committed, and may desist from committing the like again. To the performing of this may the Lord assist me, who liveth and reigneth without end, forever. Amen."—(*App.*, *Note* 149.)

Next follows the "Mode of imposing penance," drawn from the old penitential canons, a few specimens of which will suffice to show the aspect of the whole:

VI.

"If a layman shall have killed another without cause, let him fast for seven years on bread and water, and four of these as his confessor shall appoint. But after this seven years' penitence is past, let him nevertheless always mourn with as much industry as he can, forasmuch as it is unknown to men how much his penitence has availed with God."

VII.

"Whoever had determined to kill another, and was unable to accomplish his desire, let him fast three years: one of them on bread and water, and two of them as his confessor shall appoint."

VIII.

"If a layman shall have killed another unwillingly, let him fast three years: one on bread and water, and two of them as his confessor shall appoint, and let him lament his transgressions always."

IX.

"If he be a sub-deacon, let him fast six years."

"If he be a deacon, let him fast seven years."

"If he be a mass-priest, let him fast ten years, and a bishop twelve years, and let him mourn always," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 150.)

After this there follows a long list of all imaginable sins, with their appropriate sentences, and then come the rules concerning "Satisfaction," viz.:

I.

"In this part of confession the help of some theologian may conduce greatly to the expiation of sin, no less than the counsel of a learned physician to the cure of a disease."

II.

"Men often sin from their own concupiscence, and not rarely through the instigation of the devil; and that is a fearful thing, because ecclesiastics, so often sinning against God, lose the dignity of their orders."

III.

"To correct this, there is need of rigid penitence, always, nevertheless, according to the degree of order and of sin as it is

enjoined by the canons. And each one ought to undertake this penitence with all his effort and strength, yea, with the anxiety of his inmost heart. Some should submit to a penitence of one year, others of more, but always in proportion to the measure of their sins: some one month, some many months, some one week, some many weeks, some one day, some many days, and some all the days of their lives."—(*App.*, *Note* 151.)

This, assuredly, looks severe enough, and at least professes to pay profound respect to the ancient penitential canons. But now comes the principle of the composition or commutation of penance, which practically places the whole matter upon a totally different basis.

XIII.

"The compounding of sins with God is made in various manners, and alms-giving conduces chiefly to their payment."

XIV.

"Let him who is rich enough build churches to the praise of God; and if he is able to do more, let him add manors, and bring in young men who may perform the holy service for him, and daily celebrate unto God the holy mysteries."—(*App.*, *Note* 152.)

To this good work is added a large list of useful and benevolent labors, building roads and bridges, feeding the poor, &c.; and then we have the following injunction:

"Let him distribute, for the love of God, all that he has; let him abandon therewith his lands, his country, and all the desirable things of this world, and serve his Lord night and day," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 153.)

There is not a trace of all this to be found in the ancient canons, nor in the primitive fathers. That a wealthy sinner could compound his penitence for sin by building churches, endowing monasteries, making roads and bridges, &c., as a proof of repentance, was a new idea; but yet it became speedily prevalent, since, however delusive it might be to the sin-

ner, it was profitable to the Church and the priesthood, and formed the principal fund of their wealth for centuries together. But let me proceed to the accommodation in favor of the sick, which forms the next step in the novel system.

"In the following shall be set forth in what way a sick man may redeem the fast prescribed to him:

XVIII.

"Any one may redeem a fast of one day by one penny. Every one may also redeem a fast of one day by two hundred and twenty psalms. Any one, also, may redeem a fast of twelve months with thirty shillings; or, in freeing any one from a fast, it may be estimated in the same proportion; and for a fast of one day the man may sing six times *Beati* and six times *Paternoster*. And for a fast of one day, let a man bend his knees and bow himself to the ground sixty times, saying, Our Father," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 154.)

These curious regulations clearly prove that the sick man, for whose benefit they were intended, might be in a very tolerable state of bodily vigor, since otherwise the singing and the genuflections would have been a more severe task than the fasting. And supposing him to have been well enough to relish his meals, it is manifest that a penny a day, and thirty shillings a year, for the liberty of eating as usual, were a cheap purchase of his relief from bread and water. But this is not all.

XIX.

"Any one may accomplish a fast of seven years in one year, if he will sing every day the psalms of the psalter, and the same every night, and fifty in the evening. Also, by a single mass any one may compound for a fast of twelve days; and by thirty masses any one may exempt himself from a fast of one year, if he will intercede for himself in the true love of God, and confess his sins to the confessor, and amend them as he may direct, and always avoid them afterward."—(*App.*, *Note* 155.)

And at the close of this code we have the follow-

ing accommodating plan for men of rank and consequence, notwithstanding it is so strongly declared in the beginning that the greater and more powerful any one might be, in the same proportion must his sins be punished before God and man.

"*Of the Penitence of Great Men.*

I.

"In this manner an illustrious man, depending on his friends, may by their help render his penitence lighter. First, in the name of God, and to the satisfaction of his confessor, let him manifest that his faith is right, and pardon all who have sinned against him, and make confession of all his sins without any omission, and promise to repent, and receive his penance with much groaning."

II.

"Then let him lay aside his arms, &c. Let him prepare himself for three days in this manner, and let him take in aid of himself twelve companions; let them fast three days on bread, and raw herbs and water; and let him obtain besides, if he can, in order to consummate the work, seven hundred and twenty men, who will each fast three days for his sake, namely, each one three days. Thus the number of those fasts will amount to as many as there are days in the whole seven years."

III.

"When any such person shall fast, let him distribute the dishes, or preparations of food which he should have enjoyed, to all the poor people of God; and in these three days of his fast let him lay aside all worldly business whatsoever: day and night, as often as he can, let him seek the church, and watch there solicitously by the lamp of charity, and cry to God, and pray for the remission of his sins with a mourning spirit and with bended knees. Let him, also, frequently extend himself in the form of the cross, now erect, now lying prostrate on the ground. Let every great man learn, likewise, to pour forth tears from his eyes sincerely, and deplore his sins. Let him also, in these three days, feed as many of the poor as he can; and on the fourth day let him wash them all, and give them food and money. Moreover, let him who performs this penance stoop to the washing of their feet; and let them celebrate for the said

penitent on that day as many masses as with their utmost industry they are able to prepare, and in the time of these masses let absolution be given to him; and then let him take the Eucharist, unless by his too great guilt he is so hindered that he may not yet receive it. Let him promise, nevertheless, that for the future he will perform, as far as he is able, the will of God, and avoid, by the help of God, all injustice, so long as he lives, and that he will rightly hold, perpetually and above all things, the truth of Christian doctrine, and reject heathenism altogether."

IV.

"This is for the great men, and those who have a multitude of friends, but it is not given to the poor man to proceed thus. It is necessary, therefore, to exact the whole more strongly from himself, and this truly is most just, that every one should for himself pay the penalty of his iniquities, and studiously submit to his correction; for it is written *that every one shall bear his own burden.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 156.)

This code of King Edgar—drawn up by Archbishop Dunstan, and set forth by the royal authority—exhibits a very curious compound. It differs greatly from the present doctrine of Rome on several points of serious importance. That auricular confession and priestly absolution must precede, in all cases, the reception of the Eucharist; that penance is a sacrament; that the priest, in the tribunal of penance, represents the Lord Jesus Christ; that his sentence conveys absolution as though the Saviour himself had spoken; that the penitent may be absolved before his penitence is performed; that both penitent and priest are under the obligation of secrecy; that the confession is addressed not only to God, but also to the Virgin and the saints: all these are quite foreign from the notions of Dunstan, and even in the tenth century were nowhere to be found in Christendom. But the penance, for the most part, was still dictated by the priests in subjection to the ancient canons; and a very large advance was made toward the modern

system in the commutation of penance and in the inquisition of the priests, by which they were told to "extort" the guilt of the penitent.

The progress of change, however, was constantly in the same direction, until the Church was gradually brought to the point, when the Council of Lateran felt able to legislate away every trace of the ancient system which could stand in the road of papal despotism. On this, therefore, I shall enter in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

FOURTH COUNCIL OF LATERAN. THOMAS AQUINAS.

HITHERTO, during successive ages of gross ignorance and darkness, the progress of priestly corruption and despotism had gradually gone forward toward the desired point of absolute authority. This was the empire which the pope and the clergy conceived they had a right to claim over the laity. It was their practical idea of the kingdom of Christ. The true spiritual government of the Lord in the hearts of mankind, was resolved into the unresisted reign of the papal hierarchy. And to the proposed end, the Word of God, the primitive discipline, and the doctrine of the fathers, were all forced to bend, until the victory was supposed to be achieved, and the priest was believed to be clothed with little less than the powers of deity.

To crown the enterprise with entire success, the fourth Council of Lateran was convened by Pope Innocent III., A.D. 1215, the great object of which was

to bear down the encroaching advances of what they called heresy, by the outward force of fire and sword, of imprisonment, or banishment and confiscation. An immense assemblage of bishops, abbots, and titled laymen, the representatives of royalty, was brought together at the papal Church in Rome, and the decrees passed came forth before the world with all the influence of a supposed infallible authority.

It is beside my present object to enlarge on the oppressive, inquisitorial, and cruel spirit which breathes in the enactments of this celebrated Council. But the canons which bear upon our subject of the Confessional are as follows, viz.:

Canon XXI.

"Of Confession to be made, and not to be revealed by the Priest; and the Communion to be received at least at Easter.

"Every believer of either sex, after coming to years of discretion, shall faithfully confess all his sins alone, at least once a year, to his own priest, and shall endeavor, to the utmost of his power, to fulfill the penance enjoined; receiving reverently, at least at Easter, the Sacrament of the Eucharist, unless, perhaps, through the counsel of his own priest, for some reasonable cause, he should conclude to abstain at that time from its reception: otherwise, let him be prohibited from entering the Church while living, and, dying, be deprived of Christian burial. Wherefore, let this salutary law be frequently published in the churches, lest any one may assume the vail of excuse from the blindness of ignorance. If any one, however, should desire for a just cause to confess his sins to another priest, let him first ask and obtain a license from his own priest, since otherwise the other can not loose or bind."—(*App.*, *Note* 157.)

"But let the priest be discreet and cautious, that, in the manner of a skillful physician, he may pour the oil and the wine into the wounds of the sick, diligently inquiring into the circumstances both of the sinner and the sin, by which he may wisely understand what counsel he ought to give him, and what kind of remedy he should apply, using divers expedients to heal the patient. And let him by all means take heed that he betray not the sinner in any degree, either by word or by sign, or in

any other manner whatever; but if he should need more prudent counsel, let him ask for it cautiously, without any indication of the person; for we hereby decree that whoever shall presume to reveal a sin made known to him in the tribunal of penitence shall not only be deposed from the sacerdotal office, but shall also be thrust into a close monastery, to perform perpetual penance."—(*App.*, *Note* 158.)

These stringent rules did not concern the priesthood alone, for even the members of the medical profession were forced to become parties to the new discipline by the same despotic authority. This provision of the Council is in the following words, viz.:

CANON XXII.

"*That the Sick should provide for the Soul before the Body.*

"Inasmuch as corporal infirmity sometimes proceeds from sin, ... we ordain by this present decree, and strictly command the physicians of bodies, that whenever they shall happen to be called to the sick, they must, before all things, admonish and induce them to send for the physicians of souls, in order that, after provision shall have been made for the spiritual health of the sick, they may proceed to the remedy of bodily medicine more beneficially, since the cause ceasing, the effect also ceases."

"And if any of the physicians shall be found to have transgressed this our Constitution after it shall have been published by the prelates of the dioceses, let him be prohibited from entering the Church until he has given complete satisfaction for his offense."—(*App.*, *Note* 159.)

Here, then, the keystone appears to have been set in the arch of sacerdotal despotism. For the first time in the history of the Church, private auricular confession to the priest of the parish was rendered obligatory on every person without exception, at least once a year. And the neglect of it was punished, if not by *formal*, yet by *virtual* excommunication; since the transgressor was prohibited from entering the doors of the Church while living, and when dead he was deprived of Christian burial! The very terms of the decree show that this obligation was a novelty, be-

cause the sentence was not to be executed until it had first been publicly proclaimed. And even the physicians are obliged to become the agents of the priest in compelling the laity to submit to this act of usurpation, notwithstanding the danger which the patient might incur by thus forcing him to go through the process of the confessional, before he was allowed to attend to their prescriptions.

In close connection with this novel assumption of sacerdotal authority, a serious change took place in the form of absolution, which, up to this time, had been simply a prayer that God would remit the sins of the penitent, accompanied by the laying on of hands. But now the priests advanced another step; not, as formerly, content with beseeching the Lord to absolve, but saying, "I absolve thee," thus claiming a full and positive power to forgive the sins of the penitent, and taking upon them a far higher expression of prerogative than the Church had known since the apostolic day. For the evidence of this, I recur to the testimony of the learned Benedictine, Hugo Menard, in his Annotations on the Sacramentary of Gregory the Great. The passage is as follows, viz.:

"There was formerly," saith this author, "a controversy between St. Thomas and a certain doctor concerning the form of absolution; the doctor asserting that it was precatory, and that *scarcely thirty years had elapsed since all used this form only: May the omnipotent God grant to thee absolution and remission.* While the other contended that the form of absolution was enunciatory or indicative, in these words: *I absolve thee*, &c., which indicate the judicial power of the priest."—(*App.*, *Note* 160.)

Now it is highly improbable that the "certain doctor" who entered into controversy with the redoubtable Thomas Aquinas would have been so weak or rash as to assert a fact, in which, if he were in error, it

must have been in the power of every priest in Christendom to have exposed him. His positive assertion, therefore, that thirty years had hardly elapsed since the form of absolution had been precatory in all the Churches, was doubtless the truth; and he was right in opposing the introduction of the indicative form as an unwarrantable innovation. But the change was favorable to the papal doctrine of priestly power, of which Thomas was a shrewd and unflinching champion; and it is easy to imagine on which side of such an argument victory and applause would attend in the thirteenth century.

A still more positive proof, however, of the time when this change was introduced, may be derived from the form in which Thomas Aquinas has arranged the argument in his famous *Summa;* for he was born in A.D. 1224, nine years after the fourth Council of Lateran, and died in 1274, leaving his great work unfinished. And the following extracts will show how perfectly destitute his doctrine was of any authority from antiquity, and how victoriously, by his own tacit admission, that authority was arrayed on the other side. It must be granted, indeed, in palliation of his sophistry, that he thought himself bound to sustain the Council by the best reasoning in his power. That Council was called a General Council; it claimed infallibility; and it had outraged the teaching of the Scriptures and the Church, by compelling all, without exception, of either sex, to place themselves from the age of discretion in the position of penitents, and by debarring them of the sacrament, and even depriving them of access to the Church while living, and of Christian burial when dead, if they refused to submit to a private priestly inquisition at least once in every year. As a faithful soldier of the Church,

Thomas set his ingenuity to work for the purpose of justifying this novel assumption, and saw no other plan so likely to succeed as the making penitence a sacrament, and thus taking the highest ground for its universal necessity. His language is the following, viz.:

"*Whether Penitence is a Sacrament.*

"It seems that penitence is not a sacrament. For Gregory saith, and it is in the Decretals, that *The Sacraments are Baptism, Chrism, the Body and Blood of Christ: which are called Sacraments for this reason, because, under the veil of material things, the divine virtue secretly works salvation in them.* But this does not take place in penitence; because in it no material things are employed, under which the divine power works salvation. Therefore penitence is not a sacrament."

To this argument, which Thomas places in the mouth of his supposed antagonist, he answers as follows:

"But the contrary is the truth, that as baptism is employed for the purifying from sin, so also is penitence. And hence Peter said to Simon, Acts, viii., *Exercise penitence for this thy wickedness.* But baptism is a sacrament, as has been shown. Therefore, by equal reason, penitence is so likewise."—(*App.*, *Note* 161.)

Then follows a sophistical chain of argument to prove this new theological proposition, in which, however, he pretends to no authority from fathers or councils, striving only to make good his position by an ingenious, but utterly forced and unreasonable analogy, derived from baptism. Now Thomas was a man of profound learning, and never failed, when it was in his power, to exhibit for his conclusions both scriptural and patristic authority. And therefore, when we see him obliged to confess that the Church of former ages is against him, as he here does by putting Gregory and the Decretals in the mouth of his adversary, and arguing the question as if now, in the thirteenth cen-

tury, it was to be settled for the first time, on fanciful and unsupported analogies, he exhibits an example of the most flagitious *private judgment*, not to be surpassed in the whole history of heresy, and one which nothing could have made successful but the iron determination of popery to lord it over the Word of God and the rights of man, in the very recklessness of priestly despotism.

Let us next mark the plain statement of Thomas upon the other point, viz., the change of the form of absolution.

"*Whether this is the Form of this Sacrament,* I ABSOLVE THEE.

"To the third question we may proceed thus. It seems that this is not the form of this sacrament, *I absolve thee.* For the forms of the sacraments are derived from the institution of Christ and the usage of the Church. But we do not read that Christ instituted this form, nor is it even in general use; nay, more, in certain absolutions which are administered in the public Church (as in Prime and Compline, and the Supper of the Lord), the priest absolving does not use the indicative, saying, I absolve you, but the precatory form, saying, *May the Almighty God have mercy upon you,* or *May the omnipotent God grant you absolution and remission.* Therefore the form of this sacrament is not, *I absolve thee.*"

"But the contrary is the truth, that as the Lord said to his disciples (Matt., last chapter), Go teach all nations, baptizing them; so also he said to Peter, Matt., xvi., Whatever ye shall loose upon earth, &c. But the priest, relying on the authority of those words of Christ, saith, *I baptize thee.* Therefore, by the same authority he ought to say in this sacrament, *I absolve thee.*"

"CONCLUSION.

"There is no form of this sacrament of penitence more suitable than these words, *I absolve thee*, since they most aptly signify what is done in the sacrament."—(*App.*, *Note* 162.)

Here, again, we see Thomas Aquinas leaving his adversary in quiet possession of the fathers and the custom of the Church, which it was, indeed, impossible for him to deny, and going off in the very wan-

tonness of private judgment, to make out his case by an unauthorized appeal to the mode of performing baptism. True, he knew that he was secure of papal approbation. He was perfectly aware, too, that in no other way could the monstrous assumption of the fourth Council of Lateran be sustained with the show of theological argument. But this does not save him from the most glaring opposition to the whole doctrine and practice of the Church for twelve centuries together.

The fallacy of his reasoning, however, is transparent. The priest in baptism rightly uses the indicative form of words, *I baptize thee*, because, at the time of their utterance, he does *actually and visibly administer baptism*. But whether the sins of the person are remitted in baptism, the priest declares not, because he can not be certain of the fact, and therefore leaves it to Him who alone has power to forgive sins. So in the holy Eucharist, the words of Christ are repeated in connection with the consecration of the elements, but whether the reception of the sacrament does actually convey any spiritual strength or refreshment to the soul, the priest declares not, because that depends on the state of the receiver's heart, which is known to God alone. It is not in analogy with these cases, therefore, but in direct opposition to them, that in this newly-invented sacrament of penance the priest presumes to remit the sins of the party expressly, saying, *I absolve thee*, notwithstanding his perfect ignorance of the penitent's inward condition. And the attempt of Thomas to justify it by the form of baptism, in which the minister assumes no more than the performance of the *outward* act, and declares absolutely nothing as to the fact of remission of sins (although it was *for the remission of sins* that this

sacrament was instituted), exhibits one of the most audacious instances of contempt toward authority, and of arrogant usurpation of spiritual power, which have ever disgraced the name of theologian.

I shall have to recur to this subject again, when commenting on the reasons which led to the retention of this very objectionable form by our venerable Mother Church of England, and its rejection by our own. And I now proceed to the testimony of the Oriental Churches, as affording another conclusive proof of the innovation thus brought in by the overwhelming influence of the schoolmen, backed by the papacy, in those *dark ages*, when it seems that nothing was too vast for the ambition of the priests or for the gross credulity of the laity.

I quote once more the learned Benedictine, Hugo Menard, who expressly states that the Greek Churches use only the precatory form of absolution. His words are as follows, viz.:

"The Greeks, in their absolution from sins, use many precatory forms, which may be seen in their Euchology, although they begin by making mention of the power of absolving, divinely conceded to them: *Thou, O Lord, by thy holy apostles, hast bestowed on those who, in the holy Church, through successive times, exercise the priestly office, the power of remitting sins on earth, of binding and loosing every chain of unrighteousness; We beseech thee, therefore, for this our brother N., who stands before thee, grant to him thy mercy, breaking the fetter of his sins.*" —(*App.*, *Note* 163.)

The introduction of this prayer bears the stamp of modern innovation, nothing of the kind being in the ancient forms. But the body of the petition still retains the primitive words of supplication, which might be offered, with perfect propriety, either by the priesthood or the laity. And as we know that in the early ages of Christianity public penitents were reconciled

publicly, and the whole congregation united in the service, it is evident that the language employed must have been consonant with the doctrine of St. Augustin, that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were delivered to the Church (not to the priesthood separately) in the person of St. Peter. This, indeed, was the doctrine of the fathers generally. When the priesthood had usurped the seat of Christ's authority, by positively dispensing the forgiveness of sins in the private tribunal of penitence, this doctrine was altered, and a new form of absolution was adopted, to suit the change.

I shall only add, on this point, that the learned Romanist Morinus, in an express treatise on the subject, fully proves the conclusion which I have already demonstrated from Aquinas himself, namely, that the change from the ancient to the modern form was in the thirteenth century.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LATER COUNCILS.

The Roman doctrine of the Confessional, in the shape to which it was finally brought in the fourth Council of Lateran, would seem to imply that the priesthood were at least conscious of a high character for professional purity. But our wonder at their assumption is not a little increased when we find that the very contrary was the fact. It may be well to place before the reader some proofs of this from the records of two councils, one held in England, and the

other on the Continent, within the first quarter of the thirteenth century.

Thus, the Council of Oxford, A.D. 1222, enacts the following decree, in its thirty-fourth canon, viz.:

"The beneficed clergy, or those in Holy Orders, shall not presume to keep concubines publicly in their houses, nor have access to them with scandal elsewhere."—(*App.*, *Note* 164.)

The other testimony is that of a Council held A.D. 1225, where we read as follows, viz.:

CANON II.

"*Of the Punishment of Clergy having Concubines.*

"If any of the clergy shall be detected hereafter in the vice of incontinence, by publicly keeping a concubine, unless he shall forthwith expel her after this canonical admonition, let him be immediately deprived both of his office and his benefice. But if, even then, he takes no care to avoid the noisomeness of his lust, inasmuch as the increase of contumacy demands an increase of punishment, let him be stricken with the sentence of anathema."—(*App.*, *Note* 165.)

Another canon follows on the same subject, viz.:

CANON V.

"*That Clergymen can not leave the Fruits of their Livings to their Concubines and illegitimate Children.*

"In order to abolish from the house of the Lord the custom, or, rather, the corrupt practice or audacity with which the clergy (who ought to show the laity, to whom they are placed as an example, a model of chasteness), in proof of their final impenitence, leave, by their last will, the fruits of their livings to their concubines or bastards, the rigor of the ecclesiastical arm ought to be exercised against them."—(*App.*, *Note* 166.)

The subject of clerical incontinence, since the unhappy introduction of priestly celibacy in the fourth century, forms the burden of complaint and difficulty in almost all the councils. These canons, however, speaking of the *custom* of keeping concubines publicly, and leaving the property of the priest, acquired in the service of his office, by his last will and testa-

ment, to these concubines and their illegitimate children, plainly prove the utter disregard with which the ecclesiastical laws had hitherto been treated in relation to this matter. The looseness of their morals, indeed, appears in so many of the Councils, that a volume of citations might be compiled on this point alone. All historians agree that the character of the monks and of the clergy, with few exceptions, could hardly be worse than it was, in general estimation. And yet it was in an age like this that a new prerogative was added to the already vast influence of the clergy, by making each individual pastor, in the tribunal of penitence, the absolute inquisitor, judge, and dictator of every soul, male and female, belonging to his flock. It was in an age like this that the decision of a single priest was pronounced final in the forgiveness of sins, and his solitary voice, uttered in secret, was to be received as the voice of Christ himself, dispensing the prerogatives of the Most High, boldly undertaking to absolve the transgressor, and dictating, as if he were endowed with superhuman penetration, such works of satisfaction as should compensate the justice of God and heal the wounds inflicted by iniquity. And thus a power too great for the faculties of angels was committed to men, an awful proportion of whom were a reproach to the priestly profession!

But let me pass on to consider the immediate results of this vast and important addition to the prerogatives of the parochial clergy. Anterior to the fourth Council of Lateran, we do not find many instructions about the mode in which the priests were to discharge their duty toward voluntary penitents. After this period, however, the councils and constitutions of the prelates are more or less copious on the

subject. Thus the constitutions of the Bishop of Coventry, A.D. 1237, give some very precise rules for the manner of conducting the work of the Confessional, a specimen of which will be interesting.

"Concerning confession we must proceed in this manner: Let it be told the person confessing that there are three things chiefly which usually hinder men from making a true confession: delight in sin, fear of the penance to be enjoined, and shame. . . . All things being heard (which the sinner voluntarily reveals), the confessor ought to ask him if any more can be recalled to memory. If he replies *Yea*, let him utter it. If he answers *No*, then the priest ought to supply the defect of the person confessing, according to what is written, *The just man is the first accuser of himself. His friend comes, and will examine him.* The just, that is, the person confessing, ought first to accuse himself; afterward his friend, that is, the priest, ought to investigate the sins he has omitted." . . . .

"The laity, in general, must be questioned concerning tithes. . . . . And whether the penitent be single or married, he should be examined on the seven deadly sins." . . . .

"In the case of women, they should be questioned concerning witchcrafts and divination. In the case of the single, it must be inquired whether they are willing to live chastely until they are married: otherwise the confession is worthless. And, in like manner, the married must be questioned concerning the carnal sins which they committed before wedlock," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 167.)

I have felt constrained to leave one half of this citation untranslated, although the learned reader will find the remainder in the notes, carefully set down from the Latin original. It is, indeed, a point of no small difficulty to ascertain how far it is consistent with propriety to proceed with such documents; for it is certain that they are an inseparable part of the subject, that they form the staple of the Roman Confessional at the present day, and are a true though very brief index to the sort of questions which more than a hundred millions of our fellow-creatures, male and female, are obliged to answer whenever it pleases

the priest to interrogate them; while over the whole of what takes place in the confessional an impenetrable veil of secrecy is thrown. Moreover, these things are not only to be found in the authentic and public Councils of the Church of Rome herself—being, in fact, the official acts of her highest dignitaries—but the same, in substance, are now published in our own language and country, for the use of their laity, as an essential guide to those who come to confession. And yet, so abhorrent are the feelings of our age toward the open discussion of such topics, that no writer can transfer the mere records of Romanism to his pages without incurring the reproach of indelicacy.

Another set of constitutions, set forth by the Council of Cognac, in the thirty-fourth canon, prescribes a similar course of questions to be asked by the confessor on the subject of licentiousness. And for these, also, I must refer to the Appendix, Note 168.

The Council of Clermont, A.D. 1268, enacted a very minute and comprehensive system for the performance of this new duty of auricular confession. In the main, they do not differ from the constitutions of Coventry. Only a few points need be specified to show the progress of the system.

"Concerning the sins of carnality, let inquiry be made .... about the persons, whether a priest, or a deacon, or a sub-deacon, or a monk. Concerning the time, whether during the perpetual solemnities. .... And if a single layman commit fornication, he ought to undergo three years' penance, according to the rigor of the canons, fasting on the second, fourth, and sixth days of the week, by abstaining from his ordinary food. .... But because the frailty of our time does not suffer so much severity, let the priests commute or temper this sort of penalty into prayers or alms-deeds, or other satisfactions, as may seem to them expedient."—(*App.*, *Note* 169.)

The Council of Cologne, A.D. 1280, laid down some rules designed to restrain the abuses of the Con-

fessional, none of which, however, could possibly be enforced, from the very nature of the system.

"We command that the parochial priests shall frequently admonish their subjects, and even enjoin penance, that they may often come to confession. And before they come, let them diligently examine their hearts, willing to confess, and let them carefully recall their sins to memory; and let them come to confession with grief and a suppliant aspect, as if to the judgment of God. And let the priests, as the ministers of God, give the utmost diligence to the hearing of confession and enjoining of penitence, that they may listen to the person confessing attentively, diligently, and with modesty."

"Likewise in hearing confessions, let the priests select a common and fit place in the church, that they may be seen by all. But let them not hear confessions in obscure and dark places, nor out of the church, unless in great necessity or sickness.

"Also, we command, under pain of excommunication, that the priests, in hearing confessions, maintain an humble countenance, with their eyes on the ground; nor let them look in the face of the person confessing, and especially not of women.

"We order, likewise, under pain of excommunication, that no priest hear the confession of a woman with whom he has sinned, nor even the companions or encouragers, or instruments of his sin, but let him send them, both males and females, to honest and discreet confessors."

. . . . "There is a sacred order, a sacred place concerning the sin of carnality and lust, all which are noted in this verse:

"*Who, what, where, with whom, how often, why, how, when.*"

. . . . "Likewise, let no priest in anger, hatred, or even corporal fear, dare to reveal the confession of any penitent by word or sign, generally or specially by saying, I know what sort of person thou art. And if he shall reveal it in any manner, and shall be convicted of it, he ought to be degraded without mercy. If, however, he should need counsel, let him ask for it cautiously (as it is laid down), without indicating the person in any manner."

. . . . "But if any one shall not have confessed to his own parish priest fully and wholly at least once during the year, we order that the priest shall by no means administer the sacrament to him at Easter."

"Let the priests likewise diligently mark which of their parishioners do not come to confession at least once a year, and let

them give in their names to us or our official, or to the ordinary of the place, that they may be worthily punished, lest we hold the priests themselves responsible for this negligence."—(*App.*, *Note* 170.)

The Council of Exeter, held A.D. 1287, set forth a very detailed system for the Confessional, in which the ignorance of the priests, the flagellation of the penitent, and some other matters, are deserving of observation.

"*Summary, or Mode of exacting Confessions and enjoining Penance, by the same Rev. Father Peter, bishop of Exeter, imposed upon the Priests of his Diocese to be observed, in the Council of Exeter.*

. . . . "I therefore, Peter of Exeter, deeply considering these things, and COMPASSIONATING THE INCAPACITY of the holy presbyters, who hear confessions, WHOSE IGNORANCE, ALAS! I HAVE VERY OFTEN EXPERIENCED, assign to them the present summary, that they may know it for the advantage of themselves and of those confessing to them."

. . . . "Against the sins of the Spirit, they are to enjoin chiefly prayer, humility, meekness, and such like. Against gluttony and licentiousness, and covetousness and avarice, they are to enjoin FLAGELLATION OF THE BODY, fastings, DISCIPLINE, AND PILGRIMAGES."—(*App.*, *Note* 171.)

There was one more Council in this century worthy of especial note. It was assembled at Toulouse, under St. Angelus, cardinal and legate of the pope, A.D. 1229, and was peculiarly memorable for its enactments concerning the discovery and punishment of heretics. But I shall only extract the chapters bearing on Confession, and on the prohibition of allowing the laity to have possession of the Holy Scriptures, even in the Latin tongue.

"CHAPTER XIII.

"*That all Persons shall confess and commune thrice in every Year, otherwise they shall be held suspected of Heresy.*

"All persons of either sex, after they have come to years of discretion, shall make confession of their sins three times a

year to their own priest, or to some other with his consent or command, being ready to perform the penance enjoined humbly and to the utmost of their power, and receiving thrice a year, at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday, the sacrament of the Eucharist with all reverence; so that confession may precede the communion, unless perhaps, for some reasonable cause, they should abstain from its reception at the time by the advice of their own priest. Let the presbyters, therefore, be careful about these things, that they may know, by the inspection of the names, whether there are any who use subterfuge in order to avoid communing; for if any shall abstain from the communion, unless by the advice of his own priest, let him be held suspected of heresy."

"CHAPTER XIV.

"*That the Laity may not have the Books of Scripture, except the Psalter and the divine Office, and not even these Books in the Vulgar Tongue.*

"We also prohibit the laity to have the books of the Old Testament, or of the New, unless, perhaps, that some might desire, for devotion, to have the Psalter or the Breviary for the divine offices, or the Hours of the blessed Mary. BUT WE MOST STRICTLY FORBID THEM TO HAVE THESE BOOKS TRANSLATED INTO THE VULGAR TONGUE."—(*App.*, *Note* 172.)

These extracts will show the state of the matter, up to the age of the Reformation, when the Council of Trent, A.D. 1551, put forth the following decrees, as the finishing-stroke of the modern system:

"SESSION XIV., CHAPTER III.

"This holy Council also teaches that the form of the sacrament of penance, in which its power chiefly resides, is placed in these words of the minister, *I absolve thee*, &c. To which, indeed, by the custom of holy Church, certain prayers are laudably added, although they do not affect the essence of the form itself, nor are they necessary to the administration of this sacrament. And the acts of the penitent himself, namely, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, are, as it were, the elements of this sacrament, which acts, forasmuch as they are required in the penitent by the institution of God, to the integrity of the sacrament, to the full and perfect remission of sins, for this reason are called the parts of penitence. And truly the sub-

stance and effect of this sacrament, so far as concerns its virtue and efficacy, is reconciliation with God," &c.—(*App.*, *Note* 173.)

After a very fair and scriptural statement of contrition, the Council proceeds to dispense with its necessity in order to the forgiveness of the sinner, in the following words, viz.:

"Although it may happen sometimes that this contrition is perfect in charity, and reconciles man with God before this sacrament is received in act, yet the reconciliation itself is not to be ascribed to the mere contrition without the intention (*voto*) of receiving the sacrament, which is implied in it. But that *imperfect contrition* which is called ATTRITION, since it is commonly conceived either from the consideration of the infamy of sin, or from the fear of hell and punishment, if it excludes the intention of sinning, and has the hope of pardon, the Council declares not only that it does not make the man a hypocrite, and a greater sinner, but that he even becomes a temple of God and impelled by the Holy Ghost, not indeed as yet dwelling in him, but only moving him, by whom the penitent being aided, prepares for himself the way to righteousness. And although, without the sacrament of penance, it can not lead the sinner to justification by itself, nevertheless it prepares him to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of penance."—(*App.*, *Note* 174.)

"CHAPTER V.

"*Of Confession.*

"From the institution of the Sacrament of Penance, already explained, the universal Church has always understood, that the entire confession of sins was instituted by the Lord himself, and made necessary by the divine law for all who sin after baptism; because our Lord Jesus Christ, being about to ascend from earth to heaven, left his priests, the vicars of himself, as presidents and judges, to whom all mortal crimes might be brought into which the faithful of Christ might fall; to the end that by the power of the keys they should pronounce the sentence of remission or retention of sins. For it is evident that the priests can not exercise this judgment without knowing the cause; nor can they observe equity in the imposing of penance, if they declare their sins in kind only, and not rather in species, and in special detail. From which it is rightly inferred that penitents must enumerate in confession all the mortal sins of

which, after diligent self-examination, they are conscious, even the most hidden, including those which are only committed against the two last precepts of the Decalogue; which sometimes wound the soul more seriously, and are more dangerous than those which are manifested openly."—(*App.*, *Note* 175.)

As the best possible form in which the modern system of the Roman Confessional can be exhibited, I add the rules established by the eminent cardinal archbishop, Charles Borromeo, in the Council of Milan, A.D. 1565.

Speaking of those who should be confessors, the sixth chapter of this Council ordains as follows, viz.:

"Let the bishops adopt this rule in proving them, that they be pious, of good morals, learned, prudent, patient, anxious for the salvation of souls, and faithful depositories of those things which are said in confession; likewise of advanced age, especially those by whom the confessions of women are to be heard."

"Let not the priests, unless from a necessary cause, hear the confessions of women before sunrise or after sunset; nor in cells, but publicly in the church, in seats wherein a partition shall by all means be interposed between the person confessing and the confessor. And the bishops shall take care that seats of this kind are constructed in the churches by those whose duty it is, as soon as may be."—(*App.*, *Note* 176.)

"Neither let them, without necessity, hear the confession of any male or female in private houses."—(*App.*, *Note* 177.)

"The confessors should be well acquainted with the penitential canons, and let them admonish the persons confessing of the penance which those canons prescribed for every sin, that they may study so much the more diligently to beware of sin, as they find the Church to be more benignant toward them in mitigating the penances of the canons."—(*App.*, *Note* 178.)

"Let them impose public penance on those who sin publicly, as the holy Council of Trent has commanded; nor may they presume to commute this kind of public penance for other secret punishments, unless leave be given by the bishop."—(*App.*, *Note* 179.)

Enough from the fathers and the Councils has now been exhibited to enable every intelligent mind to understand the several steps by which the Confessional

has attained its modern domination. The selection of these various testimonies has demanded no small labor on my part, and I am quite aware that the careful perusal of them may be deemed a wearisome task on the part of some among my readers; but I have thought it the surest, if not the only, way by which the delusive statements of the Romanists might be thoroughly exposed, and the true rise and progress of their cherished usurpation demonstrated. I do not, indeed, charge them all with willful misrepresentation, for I doubt not that a large number of their priests and all their people are alike deceived by the bold and constant reiteration of their claims to divine authority. It was well said by one of their cardinals at the Council of Constance, quoting Cicero in his book of Paradoxes, that "there is nothing so incredible but it will become credible by repetition."* And it can not be denied that the Confessional enjoys all the advantage of the principle. It is inculcated upon them in childhood; it is renewed at every administration of the communion; and false as it is in its theory, and dangerous in its consequences both to priest and people, it is doubtless regarded with perfect sincerity as the great bond by which alone the laity can be kept firm in their allegiance, and their spiritual masters be secured in the prerogatives of their extraordinary power.

Before I conclude, it will be my duty to notice the other arguments of the Trentine Catechism, derived from the supposed superiority of their system in its practical results, and to present a sketch of the Confessional as administered by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century. But it may be well to premise a few pages of candid admissions from the learned Fleury,

* Hard. Concilia, t. viii., p. 217.

who, although a stanch Romanist, has displayed more honesty and frankness than we can often find among the priesthood of his communion. To his testimony, therefore, I shall devote the following chapter, and I think the reader will find it worthy of his serious attention.

CHAPTER XVII.

FLEURY'S ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

It will be remembered, I trust, that the fourth Council of Lateran established, throughout the whole Western Church, the compulsory work of auricular confession at least once in every year, under the penalty of exclusion from the Church when living, and deprivation of Christian burial when dead. I have called this penalty a *virtual* excommunication, because no worse consequence was attached, by many of the ancient canons, to the most atrocious crimes. Now I propose to show how plainly the Roman Catholic historian Fleury, prior of Argenteuil and confessor to the king, acknowledges that this was a perfect innovation, although it had begun among the monks some centuries before.

The first introduction of compulsory confession is referred by this learned author to the year 763, in the rules established by St. Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, for his community of canons residentiary, which in many of its features was a sort of monastic institution. The words of the historian are as follows:

"It was ordered that the clergy should confess to the bishop

twice a year, namely, at the commencement of Lent, and between the middle of August and the first of November, saving the right of confessing at other times as often as they would, either to the bishop or to a priest deputed by him. If any one should conceal a sin in confessing to the bishop, or seek to confess to other persons, the bishop, if he could discover it, should punish him by whipping or imprisonment. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT I FIND CONFESSION COMMANDED."—(*App.*, *Note* 180.)

The earliest instance furnished by our historian of reconciling penitents immediately after confession, without waiting until their penance was fulfilled, occurs in the rule established by Boniface, the famous apostle of Germany, as he was called, and a martyr. The date of this rule was about A.D. 750. Fleury quotes the words of Boniface as follows, viz.:

"Since divers accidents hinder us from fully observing the canons concerning the reconciliation of penitents, each priest, as soon as he has received their confession, shall take care to reconcile them by prayer; that is to say, he shall not wait until their penance is accomplished."—(*App.*, *Note* 181.)

The Council of Châlons-sur-Saone, which was held A.D. 813, and which I have already cited in part, furnishes some interesting evidence of the progress of innovation; and Fleury gives the following condensed view of its canons, viz.:

"The practice of penitence, according to the ancient canons, is abolished in most places; and this is the reason why we must implore the aid of the emperor, to the end that public sinners may perform public penance, and be excommunicated and reconciled according to the canons. Some do not confess thoroughly, and therefore we must warn them that they confess sins of thought as well as outward sins. They must not only confess to God, but to the priests."—(*App.*, *Note* 182.)

"We ought to impose penance according to Scripture and the custom of the Church, and banish altogether the books which they call penitentials, of which the errors are certain and the authors uncertain, and which *flatter sinners, by imposing for great sins light and unaccustomed penances.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 183.)

But this very abuse which is here condemned is precisely what the priests have practiced, by the authority of the fourth Council of Lateran, ever since the thirteenth century, and what they can hardly avoid, when the whole business of penitential discipline is left to their private discretion, according to their established modern system. Fleury proceeds, however, with some further testimony from this frank-spoken document, as follows:

"The Council of Châlons continues: There is great abuse in the pilgrimages which are made to Rome, to Tours, and elsewhere. The priests and clerks pretend in this way to purify themselves from their sins, and that they ought to be restored to their functions; the laymen imagine that they have obtained impunity for their sins, past and future; the powerful derive from them a pretext for exaction upon the poor, and the poor a title to mendicity."—(*App.*, *Note* 184.)

The Council of Paris, held A.D. 829, speaks still more plainly:

"Many priests, saith the Council, whether by negligence or ignorance, impose upon sinners other penances than those which the canons prescribe, availing themselves of certain little books which they call Penitentials. For this reason, we have all ordered that every bishop in his diocese shall diligently search for these erroneous books, in order to put them in the fire, that the ignorant priests may no longer use them to deceive men. And these priests shall be accurately instructed by their bishops concerning the discretion with which they should question those who confess, and the measure of penance which they ought to impose on them; for up to this time, through their fault, many crimes remain unpunished, to the great peril of souls. The Council recommends especially the rejection of the new penitentials, which deceived sinners by vain hopes, and that they should hold fast to the severity of the ancient canons, with respect to the abominable impurities which were then but too common."—(*App.*, *Note* 185.)

Here it is abundantly manifest that the *secrecy* of the Confessional was not yet established, and that the system was very different from what is now universal

among the Romanists; for the modern priests have no idea of any other course than that which these Councils so strongly condemned. Books are still used, drawn up by the Roman casuists on a plan resembling that of the old Penitentials; and those of the Jesuits, so admirably exposed by Pascal in his Provincial Letters, are far more accommodating to sinners than any which had preceded them. Who among them would now be so absurd as to recommend a return to the strictness of the ancient canons? Who would now venture to declare how often crimes go unpunished by any adequate penance? What Council of Paris would now order the bishops to put the modern Penitentials in the fire, and honestly declare that the priests, in their ignorance, were only deceiving their victims? Doubtless the administration of discipline was in a deplorable way when these Councils published their complaints in the ninth century; but now the whole work of the Confessional is wrapped up in impenetrable secrecy, and the detection of abuses and the correction of error are equally impossible. And Rome has even learned to praise what the early Councils censured so severely. Even the canonized Charles Borromeo tells the confessors to remind their penitents of the ancient canons, not in order to apply them, but in order to arouse the gratitude of sinners for the indulgence of this *unchangeable* Church, in doing them away, and making the pardon of their sins so easy and light a business in comparison!

But let me return to our historian. The next novelty which Fleury notices in this matter is the enforcement of penance by way of penalty for disobedience to the papal requisition. This he attributes to Pope Nicholas, A.D. 867, as follows, viz.:

"We see, in the letters of Pope Nicholas, three other ex-

amples of these canonical penances, like to those of the first ages; but what appears strange is, that he imposes penances by menace on sinners who asked not for them. For Stephen, count of Auvergne, having driven Sigon, the bishop of Clermont, from his diocese, and put a usurper in his place, the pope commands him to restore him immediately. . . . Otherwise, saith the pope, we forbid you the use of wine and flesh until you come to Rome and present yourself before us."—(*App.*, *Note* 186.)

The historian presents another innovation, now, however, perfectly legalized by the Roman Church, in the commutation of penitence for money, which was openly adopted in the instructions of Bouchard, bishop of Worms, A.D. 1022, viz.:

"For example, he who can not fast, for one day of fasting on bread and water shall sing fifty psalms on his knees in the Church, and shall feed one poor man for that day; in consideration of which he shall take what nourishment he pleases, except wine, flesh, and fat. One hundred genuflections shall take place of the fifty psalms, and the rich may redeem themselves for money."—(*App.*, *Note* 187.)

I have shown at large a still earlier introduction of this abomination in the Ecclesiastical Laws of King Edgar, but who can say how much further the same principle is carried in the secret and perfectly irresponsible Confessional of a later day?

The canon of the Council of Toulouse, forbidding the laity to have the Scriptures, has been already quoted from the original; but Fleury observes, with respect to it, that it was a novelty.

"This is the first time that I find this prohibition, but we may explain it favorably by saying, that the minds of men were so excited, that they could not arrest the controversies but by taking away the sacred books, which the heretics abused."—(*App.*, *Note* 188.)

We must remember that our historian was a Romanist; since otherwise it is impossible that he could have attempted to excuse such an impious absurdity as the taking away the only infallible record which

the wisdom of God had given for the guidance of His people, under the pretext of opposing heresy. During centuries of darkness, however, and even in the freedom and intelligence of the present age, the Church of Rome has shown the same desire to discourage, and, when it is possible, to prevent, the reading of the Bible.

I shall proceed to cite several other passages from this historian, because, making due allowance for his being a Romanist, he has spoken of the melancholy changes which took place in the penitential system of the Church, with truth and candor. My readers, I trust, will mark his statements with care, and remember that when a Romanist of unquestionable eminence and learning has acknowledged so much, it is a fair conclusion that a great deal more must belong to the whole truth of the picture.

"The canonical penitences were still in force at the end of the eleventh century. . . . But they imagined, I know not on what ground, that each sin of the same kind merited its penitence; that if, for example, a homicide ought to be expiated by a penance of ten years, it must require an hundred years for ten homicides; which rendered penitence impossible, and the canons ridiculous."—(*App.*, *Note* 189.)

"After they had rendered penitences impossible by thus multiplying them, they were obliged to come to compensations and estimations, such as we see in the decree of Bouchard, and in the writings of Peter Damiani. These consisted of psalms, genuflections, flagellations, alms, and pilgrimages: all acts which men could perform without being converted. . . . Penances rendered by proxy were much less allowable, and the castigation which a holy monk gave himself for the sake of a sinner was not a medicinal penance for that sinner; for sin is not like a pecuniary debt, which any other person can pay in discharge of the debtor, and in any sort of money which is current, but it is a malady which must be cured in the person of the sick."—(*App.*, *Note* 190.)

This honest declaration of Fleury is worthy of spe-

cial remark, because it amounts to a direct impeachment, by a learned and sincere Romanist, of the doctrine of the Catechism of Trent, p. 272, viz., that *one may satisfy for another:* a doctrine of which it is hard to say which is the most glaring, its impious interference with the sole office of Christ, its peril to the sinner, or its gross inconsistency with the truth of the Gospel system. Our author proceeds as follows:

"Another abuse was the forced penances. I find some of these in Spain from the seventh century. Afterward the bishops, seeing many sinners who did not come to submit themselves to penance, complained in the Parliaments, and besought the princes to constrain them by their temporal power. But this showed a great ignorance of the nature of penitence, which consists in repentance, and in the conversion of the heart; it was putting the sinner, who, in order to prevent divine justice, punishes himself voluntarily, in the same class with the criminal, whom human justice punishes in spite of himself."—(*App.*, *Note* 191.)

Speaking of the official course of Pope Gregory VII., Fleury remarks as follows, viz.:

"The worst evil was that he sought to sustain spiritual punishments by those which were temporal, and incompetent to any spiritual purpose. Others had already attempted the same. I have observed that the bishops implored the aid of the secular arm to force sinners to penitence, and that the popes had begun, more than two hundred years previously, to wish to regulate, by their authority, the rights of kings. Gregory VII. followed those new maxims, and pushed them still further; pretending openly that, as pope, he had a right to depose sovereigns who were rebels against the Church. He rested this pretense chiefly on excommunication.—(*App.*, *Note* 192.)

"Let us see now the consequences of these principles. Suppose a prince to be unworthy and accused of crimes, like Henry IV., king of Germany. . . . He is cited to Rome, to render account of his conduct, and does not appear. After several citations, the pope excommunicates him: he despises the censure. The pope declares him deposed from royalty, absolves his subjects from their oath of allegiance, forbids them to obey him, and permits, or even orders them, to elect another king. What must

be the result? Seditions and civil wars in the State, and schisms in the Church."—(*App.*, *Note* 193.)

"Let us return, then, to the maxims of sage antiquity. A sovereign may be excommunicated like a private man, I grant it, but .... the results should only be spiritual. .... It was never pretended, at least in the most enlightened ages of the Church, that a private man, excommunicated, lost the ownership of his property, or of his slaves, or the power of a parent over his children. JESUS CHRIST, in establishing His Gospel, did nothing by force, but all by persuasion, according to the remark of St. Augustin. He has said that His kingdom was not of this world, and he was not willing even to assume the authority of arbiter between two brothers. .... His apostles and their successors followed the same plan. .... It was not till after more than a thousand years that they undertook to form a new system, and to exalt the chief of the Church into a sovereign monarch even with respect to the temporal power."—(*App.*, *Note* 194.)

"Gregory VII.," continues our candid historian, "allowed himself to be drawn into the error already favored, that God is bound to make His justice shine forth in the present life. From this it was that in his letters he promises temporal prosperity to those who should be faithful to St. Peter, besides the expectation of eternal life; and threatens the rebels with the loss of both the one and the other. .... But God does not work miracles at the will of men, and it appears that He designed to confound the rashness of this prophecy. .... Far from correcting King Henry, the pope only gives him occasion to commit new crimes; he excites cruel wars, which throw Germany and Italy into flames; he brings a schism into the Church; they besiege himself in Rome; he is obliged to fly, and finally dies in exile at Salerno."—(*App.*, *Note* 195.)

Now here I pray the reader to observe the argument of Fleury against the new system of tyrannical compulsion adopted by the papacy in reference to the deposition of kings who had incurred excommunication. He declares rightly that our Lord and Saviour "did nothing by force, but all by persuasion," quoting St. Augustin. But it is manifest that his argument applies with far greater emphasis to the monstrous abuse of auricular confession; for, up to the thirteenth century, Christians, once admitted to the

communion of the Church, could not be deprived of it, unless they were convicted, on competent testimony, of gross sins, whereby their brethren were justly offended. Then, in the arrogance of priestly despotism, the fourth Council of Lateran commanded every believer, without exception, to confess his very thoughts in private, and to perform whatever penance the confessor might enjoin, under the penalty of public infamy; being prohibited from entering the Church while living, and denied Christian burial after death: that is to say, they established a perfectly *new* kind of sin, unknown before, and entirely unauthorized, and placed it in the same rank with the deadliest offenses, and punished it in a similar manner by a sentence almost equivalent to the greater excommunication! Here was *force* applied to *every one*, male and female, grinding all into the dust under the feet of the priesthood. What was an occasional outbreak of hostility between a pope and a king, in comparison with this sweeping and universal tyranny, exercised by a constant and perpetual system, over every heart and conscience in Christendom! To have been consistent with his own principles, therefore, Fleury ought to have denounced the Confessional as a yet more grievous usurpation than the papal claim to depose rebellious princes. But his candor on the latter subject was safe in France, where the assumption of temporal power by the popes had usually been successfully resisted. Whereas an equal degree of candor on the other would have struck at the power of the priesthood, and therefore his thoughts upon the subject could not be so openly proclaimed, although he has intimated them in many places pretty clearly.

But let me return to our author, and hear him on the subject of the general decline of spiritual disci-

pline which followed the papal indulgences first granted in the Crusades.

"Of all the results of the Crusades," saith he, "the most important to religion has been the cessation of the canonical penitences. I say the cessation, and not the abrogation; for they have never been abolished expressly by the Constitution of any pope, or of any Council.... I have seen nothing similar in the whole course of history. The canonical penances fell insensibly through the weakness of the bishops and the hardness of sinners, through negligence, through ignorance; but they received the mortal blow, as I may say, through the indulgences of the Crusade."—(*App.*, *Note* 196.)

The learned historian goes on to explain himself in the following interesting passage:

"I know," saith he, "that this was not the intention of Pope Urban and the Council of Clermont. They expected, on the contrary, to obtain two benefits at once: to deliver the Holy Land, and facilitate penitence to an infinity of sinners, who would never have undertaken it otherwise. . . . But it is to be feared that they had not sufficiently considered the solid reasons of the ancient canons which had regulated the times and the exercises of penitence. The saints who had established them had it not only in view to punish sinners, they sought chiefly to be assured of their conversion, and wished, besides, to warn them against falling again. They began, therefore, by separating them from the rest of the faithful, and they kept them thus shut up during the whole time of their penitence, except when they had to assist in church at the common prayers and instructions. Thus they kept away the occasions of sin; and the recollection of this retreat gave to penitents the leisure and opportunity to make serious reflections on the enormity of sin, the rigor of the divine justice, eternal punishment, and the other terrible truths which the priests who had charge of them failed not to set before them, in order to excite in them the spirit of compunction. Afterward they comforted them, they encouraged them, and they confirmed them by degrees in the resolution to renounce sin forever, and lead a new life."—(*App.*, *Note* 197.)

"It was not till the eighth century that they introduced pilgrimages to take the place of satisfaction; and these began to ruin penitence by distractions and occasions of relapse. Still,

however, these individual pilgrimages were much less dangerous than the Crusades."—(*App.*, *Note* 198.)

"It was, so to speak, sinners *all raw*, who, without conversion of heart, and without previous preparation, unless, perhaps, a confession such as it was, went, for the expiation of their sins, to expose themselves to the most dangerous occasions for committing them anew. Men chosen from persons of the most approved virtue would have found it difficult to preserve themselves in such voyages. It is true that some of them prepared themselves seriously for death, by paying their debts, restoring property wrongfully acquired, and satisfying all those whom they had injured; but it must be also acknowledged that the Crusade served as a pretext for men oppressed by debt to get rid of their creditors, for malefactors to avoid the punishment of their crimes, for unruly monks to quit their cloisters, for abandoned women to continue their disorders more freely, since many of them were found in the train of these armies, and some of them disguised as men."—(*App.*, *Note* 199.)

"The Crusaders, who established themselves in the East after the conquest of Jerusalem, far from being converted, corrupted themselves more and more."—(*App.*, *Note* 200.)

"At length," continues Fleury, "Jerusalem and the Holy Land fell again into the power of the infidels, and the Crusades have ceased for four hundred years; but the canonical penitences have not returned. While the Crusades continued, they took the place of penitence, not only for those who assumed the cross voluntarily, but for all great sinners, to whom the bishops would give absolution only on condition that they would perform in person the service of the Holy Land during a certain time, or would maintain for that purpose a number of soldiers. It seemed, then, that, after the end of the Crusades, they ought to have returned to the ancient penitences; but the use of them was interrupted for two hundred years at least, and the penitences had become arbitrary. The bishops scarcely any longer entered into the details of sacramental administration; the mendicant friars were the most ordinary ministers of the sacraments, and these transient missionaries could not follow long enough the conduct of a penitent to examine the progress and solidity of his conversion, as the proper pastors had formerly done: these monks were obliged to dispatch sinners promptly in order to pass to others."—(*App.*, *Note* 201.)

From the mischiefs consequent upon the Crusades,

our author proceeds to the corruption introduced by the Schoolmen and the Casuists:

"They treated morality in the Schools," saith he, "like the rest of theology, by reasoning rather than by authority, and after the manner of problems, putting into question every thing, even the clearest truths; from which have resulted, in the course of time, so many decisions of the Casuists, far removed, not only from the purity of the Gospel, but from right reason; for where will men not go in these matters when they give themselves all liberty to speculate? Moreover, the Casuists applied themselves much more to impart the knowledge of sins than to show their remedies. They occupied themselves chiefly in deciding what constituted mortal sin, and to distinguish the virtue to which each sin was contrary, whether to justice, prudence, or temperance; they studied, as one may say, to put sins below their standard, and to justify many actions, which the ancients, less subtle, but more sincere, judged to be criminal."—(*App.*, *Note* 202.)

Such has become the practical administration of the Confessional, according to the admissions even of this learned Romanist. But how little did he know—nay, how little does any man know—of the real state of a process conducted by so many thousand priests of different character, honesty, piety, and judgment, toward millions of subjects, male and female, young and old, in every rank and condition of society, all in profound secrecy, under no check of human responsibility, with every possible temptation to abuse, and with the most powerful motives of superstition to guard them from detection!

And now, after showing by so long an array of witnesses, the rise, progress, and final consummation of the Confessional in the Church of Rome, I have next to consider the argument of expediency, as it is presented in the Catechism of Trent, and to test its validity by an appeal to facts, with especial regard to the developments of the Jesuit system.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ARGUMENT OF EXPEDIENCY.

The advocates of Rome are dexterous logicians, and neglect no mode of recommending their favorite institution which is likely to produce an advantageous impression. Hence the authors of the Catechism of Trent boldly assume the argument of expediency, as if it were decisive in their favor. "Abolish sacramental confession," say they, "and that moment you deluge society with all sorts of secret crimes—crimes, too, and others of still greater enormity, which men, once depraved by vicious habits, will not dread to commit in open day. The salutary shame that attends confession restrains licentiousness, bridles desire, and coerces the evil propensities of human nature."*

If there were any basis of truth for this lofty assumption, it would constitute, of itself, a powerful recommendation of the Roman system. But I do not hesitate to pronounce it an absolute fallacy, in direct conflict with the whole tenor of history and experience. I deny not, indeed, that there is an intrinsic difficulty in the secret nature of this peculiar institution, which forbids our speculating upon its results in every case of individual application. Neither do I deny the theoretical possibility of its being so administered as to be useful, in some respects, to those who are deprived of the far superior teaching of the Word of God. And yet I am well persuaded that few impartial and unprejudiced observers can look at its practical effects on the broad scale of national morals and character with-

* Page 254.

out being perfectly convinced of its pernicious influence, since the fruits of the system correspond most accurately to the anticipations which a thoughtful and religious mind would form in reflecting upon its unscriptural rules and principles of action.

For who has not read of the awful immorality, the licentiousness and degradation of the Roman priesthood themselves, during the ages of darkness which preceded the Reformation? Who is so ignorant as not to know that many of their popes, their bishops, and even their religious orders, were a reproach not only to the Church of Christ, but even to humanity? Their own Councils and historians bear witness to the fact; and notwithstanding the ingenious efforts of their modern writers to beguile the public mind upon the subject—assisted, I am sorry to say, by some nominal Protestants, who have sacrified the evidence of truth in the service of a spurious liberality—yet the record is engraved upon the history of Europe in characters of crime and blood which are perfectly indelible.

And how does the argument of expediency appear, in the aspect of the nations, since the Reformation of the sixteenth century? Where has the boasted moral superiority of the Confessional been found in the countries which continued subject to the papal scepter? What portions of the globe were so noted for robberies and assassinations as the very territories of the popedom? Where were chastity and conjugal fidelity so lightly regarded? Where was, notoriously, so little restraint upon the worst passions of our nature, lust, malice, and revenge? Where was the administration of justice so uncertain, bribery so shameless, personal liberty so insecure, faction so fierce, cupidity so unscrupulous, despotism so cruel?

Was all this the fault of the people? No, truly. These countries were once far in advance of the civilization of Europe. The fairest heritage of the ancient world had fallen into the hands of the pope, with all the noble advantages of the Roman race and character, all the treasures of classic literature, all the precious remains of the arts, all the inspiring associations of great names and high achievements. Spain, in the sixteenth century, stood proudly eminent among the first powers of the Continent. Naples, Genoa, Florence, Venice, were all distinguished among their cotemporaries. No better qualities could have been desired for the true genius of Christianity to mould into virtue, than the people possessed, until they had been debased for successive generations by the yoke of the Confessional.

And now, after three hundred years have passed, who that is not willfully blind, can look at the progress of the nations of Christendom without perceiving the marvelous difference between those countries where the religion of the Bible has been established, and those in which the religion of the priest has continued its oppressive sway? Who can fail to observe the rapid advancement of the Protestant portions of the earth, when compared with the papal, in the useful arts, in commerce, in literature, in education, in civil rights, in social privileges, in moral sense, in political influence? We have only, for example, to survey Italy, Spain, Portugal, and South America, in contrast with England, Holland, and the United States. We have only to look at the mass of the Roman population in Ireland, and compare them, in morals and intelligence, with their Protestant countrymen. We have only, in a word, to try the question by any reasonable standard of existing facts, and

it will be obvious to any candid mind that the supremacy of the Confessional, instead of being friendly to the true interests of nations, has pressed them down below the general level, and kept them far behind the rest in all the better objects of earthly energy and devotion.

And yet this contrast would doubtless have been much more striking than it is, if it were not for the fact that the principles of the Reformed Churches have greatly modified the practical operation of Romanism, even in many of those places where Popery is supreme. The constant effort to proselyte Protestants, the motives of interest, the arguments of policy, and the sympathies of social intercourse, have all tended to influence most beneficially the proper results of the papal system throughout the Continent of Europe. They operate, to a considerable extent, even in the metropolis of the pontiff, Rome itself; since it is obvious that a constant power must be exerted in this way, however indirectly and unconsciously, by the wealthy crowds who come from every quarter of the civilized world, to admire the venerable ruins of ancient days, and to luxuriate among the paintings, the statues, and the ecclesiastical magnificence of "the eternal city."

I am well aware, however, that this is an invidious topic. And assuredly it is one which I should have gladly passed over without remark, if the proud boast of our adversaries had not challenged a reply. It gives me no pleasure, but, on the contrary, the deepest pain, to be forced to notice the evil results of any professedly religious system. But I can not pass by the assumption of morality which is made by Romanists themselves an important branch of the argument in their favor.

And yet I willingly grant the propriety and justice

of such an argument, if the fact assumed were capable of demonstration. The word of the Redeemer Himself has established the maxim, BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM. Let the advocates of Popery, then, manifest to the world the superiority which they claim, by showing when, where, and how their system has produced a purer and higher moral standard among the masses of their followers than the Reformed Churches exhibit. Let them not merely assert, but prove, the happy results of their Confessional, by displaying a more fervent philanthropy, a larger intelligence, a stricter love of truth, a sterner honesty, a more meek and quiet spirit, a better regulated domestic life, a more self-denying temperance, or any other quality to which they can appeal, as evidence to justify their lofty assumption. Here is the test which will bring the matter home to the common sense and observation of every civilized community. And to that test I am perfectly willing to submit the question.

But before I leave this part of my subject, I owe it to the reader to present another aspect of the case, which perhaps affords the only direct access to the practical history of the Confessional since the Reformation. It is derived from the celebrated attack of Pascal and his fellow Jansenists upon the Jesuits, about the middle of the seventeenth century. Both the parties belonged to the same communion. Both numbered, in their respective ranks, the greatest luminaries of their age. The quarrel lasted long, and the strife was waged with an abundant amount of theological subtlety and bitterness. And the result proved that the Jansenists were right in the main points of their accusation, for the Jesuits were expelled from the nations of Europe by the governments themselves, as dangerous to the safety of the State.

and the pope was reluctantly compelled to abolish their order.

Time had almost committed this internal controversy to oblivion in the public mind, when the restoration of the Jesuits by Pope Pius VII., August 7, 1814, revived the subject, and gave fresh interest to the work of Pascal, which first drew the attention of the world at large to the systematic corruption of the Confessional, as it had been administered during the better part of a century by the most powerful and favored body of ecclesiastics in the Church of Rome. Of course, it is impossible to prove by direct evidence how far the system of the Jesuits was followed by the other priests belonging to the papal communion. Nor do I wish the reader to forget that many voices among the Roman priesthood were raised against their doctrine, and that the pope condemned it. Nevertheless, there are many circumstances to be taken into the account before we can settle the real character of that condemnation; namely, that the Jansenists, who were the most strenuous opponents of the Jesuits, were promptly condemned for certain errors in the doctrine of election, and not only condemned, but persecuted; that the Jesuits were not condemned until almost twenty years afterward, and, even when condemned, were secretly indulged, and actually continued their order, notwithstanding it was formally abolished, from A.D. 1773 to A.D. 1814; that they had been positively expelled by the governments of Europe many years before the pope would interfere; that he did not condemn them at last, until he was compelled by motives of expediency; that they have since been restored to their former rights and privileges; and that notwithstanding they have within a few years been again expelled from several places, and even from

Rome itself, yet they still continue to be the most active and favored agents of the papacy. It should further be remembered that the Jesuits could have had no other motive, in their corrupt administration of the Confessional, than to recommend themselves and their Church to the prevailing habits of the times; and it is difficult to see why the same motive should not influence, more or less, the general system among their brethren, on the principle that *like causes produce like effects*. And, finally, in justice to those much-abused men, it should be observed that they defended themselves pertinaciously, on the ground that they had taught nothing new in principle, but that the very same maxims were in use among the Dominicans and others long before the existence of their Society; the only difference being that they were not published so openly to the world, nor applied so extensively to their proper consequences.

With these remarks, I shall now present to the reader, from the famous Provincial Letters of Pascal, some of the principal maxims of the Jesuits, to guide the administration of the Confessional, in the seventeenth century.* I ought, perhaps, to add that the author was not a priest, but a layman of the most brilliant and profound genius, equally remarkable for his attainments in mathematics, in general literature, and in theology, and of the highest character for probity, for austere and even ascetic piety, and for his fervent attachment to the Church of Rome.

I commence with Pascal's statement of the general policy of the Jesuits, which he explains in the following terms, viz.:

* The original will be found in the Appendix, from the Amsterdam edition of A.D. 1735. It may be well to apprise the French reader, however, that the orthography is not according to the "Academy."

"Know, then, that their object is not to corrupt morals; that is not their design. But neither have they for their only end that of reforming them; this would be bad policy. Here is their idea. They have a sufficiently good opinion of themselves to believe that it is useful and even necessary to the interests of religion that their credit should extend every where, and that they should govern all consciences. And because the severe maxims of the Gospel are fitted to govern some sorts of persons, they avail themselves of these on those occasions which are favorable to them. But as these same maxims do not agree with the design of the majority of mankind, they leave them in consideration of such persons, in order that they may have somewhat to satisfy every one. For this reason it is that, as they have to do with persons of every condition and of different nations, it becomes necessary to have casuists suited to all this diversity."—(*App.*, *Note* 203.)

"From this principle you may easily perceive that if they had none but lax casuists, they would ruin their principal design, which is to embrace all the world, since those who are truly pious seek a course more severe. But as there are not many of this sort, they do not want many severe directors to conduct them. They have a few of them for the few; while the crowd of lax casuists offer themselves to the crowd of those who seek for laxity."—(*App.*, *Note* 204.)

"It is by this *obliging and accommodating* conduct, as Father Petau calls it, that they offer their arms to all the world... By this they retain all their friends, and defend themselves against all their enemies."—(*App.*, *Note* 205.)

Such being, according to Pascal, the general object of the Jesuit system, I proceed to the statements of the accommodating class on the subject of transgression. And the reader will bear in mind that the passages in italics are quotations from the most eminent writers of that order.

"*An action can not be imputed as a sin, unless God gives us, before it is committed, the knowledge of the evil which it involves, and an inspiration which excites us to avoid it.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 206.)

"*An action can not be imputed as blamable when it is involuntary. In order that an action should be voluntary, it must proceed from a man who sees, who knows, who understands the good and the evil which is in it.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 207.)

Pascal next cites the Jesuits' doctrine of *Probability*, which they applied with singular adroitness to the indulgence of all sorts of immorality.

"*An opinion is called probable when it is founded on reasons of some consideration. From whence it sometimes results that a single doctor of much gravity may render an opinion probable; for a man particularly given to study would not adopt an opinion unless he were influenced by a good and sufficient reason. . . And the restriction which certain authors maintain does not please me, viz., that the authority of such a doctor is sufficient in matters of human, but not in those of the divine law. For it is of great weight in both.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 208.)

Our author, who presents his argument for the most part in the form of a dialogue between himself and a Jesuit, states here an objection that the doctors may differ in their opinions of probability; to which his instructor replies:

"That is only so much the better. On the contrary, they hardly ever agree. There are few questions where you will not find that one says Yes, and the other says No. And in all such cases both the contrary opinions are probable."—(*App.*, *Note* 209.)

From these premises the Jesuit draws the following conclusion, for which he cites the authority of several standard writers:

"*A doctor, being consulted, may give a counsel not only probable according to his opinion, but contrary to his opinion, if it be esteemed probable by others, whenever the advice thus contrary to his own appears to be more favorable and more agreeable to the person who consults him. But I further affirm that he will not go beyond reason if he gives to those who consult him an advice held probable by some learned man, even when he is persuaded that it is absolutely false.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 210.)

The practical results of this accommodating doctrine are applied directly to the Confessional in these words:

"*When the penitent*, says Father Bauni, among others, *follows a probable opinion, the Confessor ought to absolve him, although his own opinion may be contrary to that of the penitent.* . . .

To refuse absolution to a penitent who acts according to a probable opinion is a sin which in its nature is mortal."—(*App.*, *Note* 211.)

To avoid the opposition between the ancient and the modern doctrines, the Jesuit next argues that in questions of morals the moderns are to be followed, because they alone could understand what was suited to their own times. This rule is laid down in the following passage, among many others:

"*In questions concerning morals the new casuists are preferable to the old Fathers, although these were nearer to the Apostles.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 212.)

And in order to avoid conflicting with the canons and bulls of the popes which sometimes were cited against them, the Jesuits adopted a mode of argument which was remarkable not only for its ingenious evasiveness, but yet more for its cool audacity. Witness the specimen which follows:

"For example, Pope Gregory XIV. has declared that assassins are unworthy to enjoy the asylum of the churches, and that they ought to be taken away from them. Nevertheless, our twenty-four seniors say that all those who kill by treachery ought not to incur the penalty of this Bull. That seems to you a contradiction, but it may be reconciled by interpreting the word *assassin*, as they do in these words: "*Are not assassins unworthy to enjoy the privilege of the churches? Yes, by the Bull of Gregory XIV. But we understand by the word assassins those who have received money for killing any one by treachery. From which it follows that those who kill without receiving any price for it, but only in order to oblige their friends, are not called assassins.* In like manner, it is said in the Gospel, *Give alms of your superfluity.* Nevertheless, many casuists have found a way to discharge the wealthiest men from the obligation to give alms. That likewise appears a contradiction to you; but they readily enable you to perceive the agreement by interpreting the word *superfluity* in such a manner that a case of superfluity can hardly ever happen. And this is what the learned Vasquez has done in his treatise on Alms-giving, in these words: *That which people of the world keep in order to re-establish their*

own condition or that of their relations, is not called superfluity. And this is the reason why we shall hardly find that there is ever any superfluity among people of the world, and not even among kings."

"Diana also, having quoted these words from Vasquez, because he usually relies upon our Fathers" (although not a Jesuit himself), "draws from them this good conclusion, *That in the question, Whether the rich are obliged to give alms of their superfluity, notwithstanding the affirmative is true, it will never happen, or almost never, that it is obligatory in practice.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 213.)

The Jesuits, however, did not insist that an opinion which was new, even when its author was a grave divine, might be adopted immediately. Some little time was necessary. Thus Pascal's instructor lays down the rule:

"When time has ripened an opinion, then it is altogether probable and sure. And from this is derived what the learned Caramouel says in the letter where he dedicates to Diana his Fundamental Theology, viz., that this great Diana *has rendered many opinions probable which were not so before; and therefore there is no sin in following them now, although there would have been formerly.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 214.)

In justification and defense of the loose and dangerous morality of the Jesuits, Pascal's instructor makes the following statement:

"Alas! said the Father, our principal end would have been to establish no other maxims than those of the Gospel in all their severity. And every one may see plainly by the regulation of our morals, that if we suffer some laxity in others, it is more by condescension than by design. We are compelled to it. Mankind are so corrupt in our days, that as we are not able to make them come to us, we are obliged to go to them. Otherwise they would leave us altogether; they would even do worse; they would abandon themselves entirely. And it is in order to retain them that our casuists have considered the vices to which they are the most addicted in all conditions, with the view of establishing maxims so mild, and yet without wounding the truth, that they must be of a difficult composition if they are not content with them; for the capital design which our

Society has undertaken for the good of religion, is to disgust no one, so that the world may not be driven to despair.

"Therefore we have maxims for all sorts of persons, for the holders of benefices, for priests, for monks, for gentlemen, for domestics, for the rich, for those who are engaged in commerce, for those who are embarrassed in their circumstances, for those who are in indigence, for women who are devout, for those who are not devout, for married persons, for libertines. In a word, nothing has escaped their foresight."—(*App.*, *Note* 215.)

"Let us begin with the holders of benefices. You know what a traffic is carried on in our day in benefices, and that if we were obliged to have recourse to what St. Thomas and the ancients have written, there would be a great many in the Church guilty of simony. This is the reason why it has been very necessary that our Fathers should temper matters by their prudence, as these words of Valentia will teach you. . . . *If any one gives a temporal good for a spiritual*, that is to say, money for a benefice, *and the money be given as the price of the benefice, it is a manifest simony. But if the money be given as the motive which leads the will of the collator to confer the benefice, this is not simony, even when he who confers it expects and considers the money as his chief object.* . . . By this means we prevent an infinite number of simoniacal sins. For who would be so wicked as to refuse, in giving money for a benefice, to carry his intention to the giving it *as a motive* which induces the holder to resign it, instead of giving it as *the price* of the benefice? No one is so forsaken of God as to act in a manner like that."—(*App.*, *Note* 216.)

"As to the priests, we have several maxims which favor them sufficiently. For example. . . . Father Bauni thus resolves this question: *Can a priest say mass the same day on which he has committed a mortal sin, and one of the most criminal, by confessing beforehand? No, says Villalobos, by reason of his impurity; but Sancius says Yes, and without any sin; and I hold his opinion sure, and that it ought to be followed in practice.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 217.)

Pascal objects to this, that the laws of the Church were expressly opposed to such a decision, and his Jesuit instructor admits the fact, and avoids the consequence, as follows:

"You are right, but you do not yet know this fine maxim of our Fathers: *That the laws of the Church lose their force, when*

men no longer observe them. . . . We see the present necessities of the Church much better than the ancients."—(*App.*, *Note* 218.)

"But enough about the priests . . . . let us come to the members of the religious orders. As their greatest difficulty lies in the obedience which they owe to their superiors, listen to the accommodation which our Fathers apply in this matter. . . . *It is beyond dispute that the member of a religious order who has on his side a probable opinion, is not obliged to obey his superior, although the opinion of the superior should be the more probable; for in such case it is permitted to the friar to embrace the opinion which he finds the most agreeable.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 219.)

"With respect to body-servants called valets. We have considered in their favor the difficulty they experience, when they are persons of conscience, in serving masters who are debauched. For if they do not perform all the work expected, they lose their place; and if they obey their employers, they have scruples. It is to console them that our twenty-four Fathers have marked out the services which they may render with the safety of their conscience. Here are some of them. *They may carry letters and presents, open the doors and windows, help their master to ascend to the window, hold the ladder while he climbs up; all this is allowed as indifferent. It is true, that for the ladder they must be threatened more than ordinary if they refuse, because it is an injury against the owner of the house to enter it by the window.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 220.)

"But our Father Bauni, again, has well instructed the valets to render all these services to their masters innocently, by providing that they shall direct their intention not to the sins of which they are the instruments, but only to the gain which accrues to them thereby. . . . *Let the confessors carefully observe,* says he, *that they can not absolve those valets who perform unchaste commissions, if they consent to the sins of their masters; but the contrary must be said if they do it for their temporal accommodation.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 221.)

"The same Father Bauni has also established this great maxim in favor of those who are not content with their wages. *Can valets who complain of their wages increase them of themselves, by taking to their own use as much of the property belonging to their masters as they suppose to be necessary, in order that their wages may be equal to their trouble? They may do so under certain circumstances; as when they are so poor that, in seeking for a situation, they have been obliged to accept the offer made*

to them, and other valets of their quality gain more elsewhere."—(*App.*, *Note* 222.)

Our author proceeds to exhibit this audacious system of Jesuitical casuistry in its application to crimes of a deeper dye. Thus the priestly instructor of Pascal explains and defends it:

"Know, then, that this marvelous principle is our great method of *directing the intention*, of which the importance is such in our morals, that I might almost compare it with the doctrine of Probability. . . . But I shall enable you to discern this grand method in all its luster on the subject of homicide, which it justifies on a thousand occasions, in order that you may judge, by such an effect, how much it is capable of accomplishing. . . . We never suffer men to have the formal intention of sinning for the mere purpose of sinning; and whoever hardens himself to such a degree that he has no other end in evil besides the evil itself, we renounce him at once; that is diabolical: and this is a rule without exception of age, of sex, of quality. But when they are not in this unhappy disposition, then we endeavor to put in practice our method of *directing the intention*, which consists in proposing as the end of our actions an object permitted. This is not because we neglect, as far as may be in our power, to turn men away from forbidden things; but when we can not prevent the act, we at least purify the intention; and thus we correct the vice of the means by the purity of the end."—(*App.*, *Note* 223.)

"That you may see the alliance which our Fathers have made between the maxims of the Gospel and those of the world by this direction of the intention, listen to our Father Reginaldus: *It is forbidden to individuals to avenge themselves; for St. Paul saith, Render to no man evil for evil; . . . besides all that is said in the Gospel about the forgiveness of offenses, as in the 6th and 18th chapters of St. Matthew. . . . From all which it appears that a soldier may pursue on the spot a man who has wounded him; not, indeed, with the intention of returning evil for evil, but with that of preserving his honor.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 224.)

"See you not here how careful they are to forbid the intention of returning evil for evil, because the Scripture condemns it? They would never have suffered it. Remark what Lessius says: *He who has received a slap on the cheek must not have the intention to avenge himself; but he may well have the intention to avoid disgrace, and for that end to repel the injury on the spot,*

and even with the sword. We are so far from allowing that men should have the design of avenging themselves on their enemies, that our Fathers are not willing that they should even desire their death by an emotion of hatred. Mark our Father Escobar: *If your enemy be disposed to do you injury, you ought not to wish his death by an emotion of hatred, but you may well do it in order to avoid your own hurt.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 225.)

"Hear, again, this passage from our Father Gaspar Hurtado, cited by Diana. *A person holding a benefice may without any mortal sin desire the death of him who holds a pension on his benefice; and a son that of his father, and may rejoice when it takes place, provided that this desire be on account of the good which will accrue to himself, and not from any personal hatred.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 226.)

By these accommodating maxims, the lawfulness of duelling is defended in the following extract from Hurtado de Mendoza, quoted by Diana, as full authority in the judgment of Pascal's Jesuit instructor.

"If *a gentleman who is challenged to a duel is known not to be devout, and that the sins which he is constantly seen to commit without scruple make it easy to judge that his refusal of the challenge proceeds not from the fear of God, but from cowardice, and therefore he will have it said that he is a hen, and not a man; he may, in order to preserve his honor, repair to the place appointed; not, indeed, with the express intention of fighting a duel, but only with that of defending himself, if the challenger should come to attack him unjustly. And his action will be quite indifferent in itself. For what evil is there in going into a field, walking about in expectation of a man, and defending one's self if assaulted? And thus he does not sin in any manner, since this is by no means the acceptance of a challenge, the intention being directed to other circumstances. For the acceptance of a challenge consists in the express intention of fighting, which such an individual has not.*—(*App.*, *Note* 227.)

"Sanchez, however, allows that a challenge may not only be accepted, but may even be given, when the INTENTION IS WELL DIRECTED. *It is very reasonable*, says he, *to say that a man may fight a duel to save his life, his honor, or a considerable amount of his property, when it is certain that his enemy seeks to rob him of them by unjust lawsuits and chicanery, and that he has no other means of preserving them but this alone. And Navarre says well that, under such circumstances, it is permitted to accept and to*

offer a challenge; and also that a man may kill his enemy privately. And even in the circumstances mentioned, he ought not to use the mode of the duel, if he can kill his man in secret, and thus be rid of the difficulty; because by this means he will avoid at once the exposure of his own life in combat and the participation of the sin which his enemy would commit by a duel."—(*App.*, *Note* 228.)

My reader, perhaps, has lifted up his eyes in astonishment long ago at this astounding system of Christian ethics, unblushingly inculcated by the great lights of the Jesuits, a hundred years after the Reformation, for the government of the Confessional. But I have not yet done with the work of Pascal, which discloses, a little further on, a yet deeper abyss of iniquity.

"According to our Father Baldelle, quoted by Escobar, *It is permitted to kill him who says, You have lied, if we can not repress him otherwise.* And we may kill, in like manner, for slanders, according to our Fathers. For Lessius, whom Father Hereau, among others, follows word for word, says: *If you endeavor to ruin my reputation by calumnies before persons of honor, and I can not avoid it otherwise than by killing you, may I do it? Yes, according to the modern authors, and even although the crime which you publish is true, if at the same time it be secret, so that you could not discover it by the course of justice. And here is the proof of the assertion. If you would rob me of my honor by giving me a slap on the face, I may hinder it by force of arms; therefore the same defense is permitted when you seek to do me the same injury with the tongue. Moreover, we may prevent affronts; then we may also prevent slander. Finally, honor is dearer than life. But we may kill to defend our life; then we may kill to defend our honor.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 229.)

"Nevertheless, as our Fathers are very circumspect, they have found it to the purpose to forbid the putting this doctrine into use on trifling occasions; for they say, at least, *That we ought hardly to practice it.* And this has not been without reason: here it is. I know it well, said I; it is because the law of God forbids homicide. They do not put it on that ground, replied the Father; they consider it permitted in conscience, and in regard to the truth in itself. And why, then, do they forbid it? Listen, saith he: It is because we should reduce the population

of the State to nothing, if we killed all the slanderers. Learn this from our Reginaldus. *Notwithstanding this opinion, that we may kill for slander, is not without probability in theory, yet we must follow the contrary in practice; for we must always avoid injuring the State in our mode of defending ourselves. And it is manifest that in killing every one offending after this sort, there would be a great number of murders.* Lessius speaks in the same way. *We must be careful that the use of this maxim be not hurtful to the State; for then we must not permit it.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 230.)

Pascal proceeds to prove that the shocking license of these demoralizing principles was allowed not only to the laymen, but to the priests and the monks likewise.

"Tanner says, *That it is permitted to ecclesiastics, and to the members of religious orders themselves, to kill for the purpose of defending not only their life, but also their goods, or those of their Society.* Becanus, Reginaldus, Layman, Lessius, and the others all use the same words. And, even according to our celebrated Father L'Amy, it is permitted to priests and friars to hinder those who seek to blacken their character with calumnies by killing them, in order to prevent it; but it is always by DIRECTING THE INTENTION RIGHTLY. These are his words: *It is permitted to an ecclesiastic or to a friar to kill a calumniator, who threatens to publish crimes scandalous to his community or to himself, if there be no other way to prevent him, as when he is ready to spread his slanders, if he be not killed promptly. For in such a case, as it would be permitted to this friar to kill him who would take away his life, it is also permitted to kill him who would take away the honor either of himself or of his community, in like manner as in the case of men of the world.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 231.)

My readers will consent, I am sure, to be detained a little longer, in order that the much-talked-of doctrines of equivocation and mental reservation may be exhibited in the words of the Jesuits themselves. On these subjects the instructor of Pascal proceeds as follows:

"I wish now to speak of the facilities which we have introduced in order to avoid sins in the conversations and intrigues

of the world. One of the most embarrassing things which we experience there is to avoid lying, and especially when we wish to make men believe what is false. For this purpose our doctrine of equivocation serves admirably, by which *we are permitted to employ ambiguous terms, causing them to be understood in a different sense from that in which we understand them*, as Sanchez expresses it.... We have published this so much, that at last all the world has learned it. But do you know how we should manage when we can not find equivocal words? No, my father. I suspected so, said he; that is new: it is the doctrine of mental reservations. Sanchez states it in the same place: *We may swear*, saith he, *that we have not done a thing, although we have done it effectively, understanding in ourselves that we have not done it on a certain day, or before we were born, or with some other similar qualification, while the words which we utter prevent the fact from being known. And this is very convenient on many occasions, and is always quite just, whenever it is necessary or useful to our health, our honor, or our property.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 232.)

"How, my father," objects Pascal, "and is not this a lie, and even a perjury? No, said the father: Sanchez proves it in the same place, and our Father Filiutius also, because, says he, *it is the intention which governs the quality of the act.* And he gives there another method still more sure to avoid lying, viz., that, after saying aloud, *I swear that I have not done this thing*, we may add in a whisper, *to-day;* or that, after saying aloud, *I swear*, we may add in a whisper, *that I say*, and then go on afterward in a loud voice, *that I have not done this thing*. You see clearly that this is saying the truth. I acknowledge it, said I to him; but perhaps we may find that it is saying the truth *in a whisper*, and telling a lie *with a loud voice;* besides which I should fear that many persons would not have sufficient presence of mind to avail themselves of these methods. Our Fathers, replied he, have taught at the same place, in favor of those who do not know how to use these mental reservations, that, in order not to lie, it suffices for them to say simply *that they have not done* what they have done, provided *they have the intention, in general, to give their declaration the sense which a man of ability would give to it.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 233.)

"Now tell me candidly, have you not often been embarrassed for want of this knowledge? Sometimes, said I to him. And will you not also confess, continued he, that it would frequently be very convenient to be dispensed in conscience from

keeping certain promises which we have given? It would be, I replied, the greatest convenience in the world. Listen, then, to Escobar, where he lays down this general rule: *Promises are without obligation, when we have no intention to bind ourselves by making them. But it seldom happens that we have this intention, at least unless we confirm them by oath or by contract; so that when we say simply I will do it, we are to be understood as saying that we will do it if we do not change our mind, because we do not mean to deprive ourselves of our liberty.* He states at the end, that *all this is taken from Molina and our other authors;* and therefore we can have no doubt upon the question."—(*App.*, *Note* 234.)

My next extract will show the indulgence of the Jesuit system toward willful calumny. And it is highly probable that it will furnish the real key to the bold and reckless spirit of misrepresentation in which so many writers of that school have violated the truth of history, and shamelessly blackened the characters of the living and the dead, whenever the interests of their Church or of themselves required the service of mendacity.

"It is only a venial sin to calumniate and accuse of false crimes, in order to ruin the credit of those who speak ill of us... *It is certainly a probable opinion,* says Caramouel, *that there is no mortal sin in calumniating falsely, for the purpose of preserving our honor. For it is maintained by more than twenty grave doctors, Gaspar Hurtado, Dicastillus, Jesuits, &c.; so that if this doctrine be not probable, there would hardly be any which could be so called in all theology.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 235.)

My limits oblige me to pass over many topics in this extraordinary system; but I can not omit the following passages, which were plainly designed to secure the granting of absolution without regard to the spiritual state of the penitent, while yet the confessor should feel himself discharged from all responsibility.

"*The priest is obliged to believe the penitent on his word.... It is not necessary that the Confessor should be persuaded that*

the resolution of the penitent will be performed, nor even that he should judge it to be probable; but it suffices for him to think that the penitent at the time has the general intention, although he should fall back again in a very little while. And this is what is taught by all our writers."—(*App.*, *Note* 236.)

Pascal here objects that, according to the opinion of Father Petau himself, true penitence is necessary for the reception of the sacrament. To which his Jesuit instructor replies as follows:

"Father Petau speaks of the *ancient Church.* But that is now so *out of season*, to use the words of our Fathers, that the contrary, according to Father Bauni, is the only truth. *There are authors who say that we ought to refuse absolution to those who often fall back into the same sins, and especially when, after having been many times absolved, there is no appearance of amendment; and others say No. But the only true opinion is, that we must not refuse them absolution; and even though they do not profit by all the advice which we have often given them, though they have not kept the promises which they have made to change their life, though they have not labored to purify themselves, it is no matter; and whatever others may say about it, the true opinion, and that which we should follow, is that, even in all such cases, they ought to be absolved.* And again: *We ought neither to refuse nor delay absolution to those who are in habitual sins against the laws of God, of nature, and of the Church, although we do not see in them any hope of amendment.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 237.)

Once more:

"Hear Father Bauni. *We may absolve him who acknowledges that the hope of being absolved has induced him to sin with more facility than he would have done without this hope.* And Father Caussin, defending this proposition, says, *that if it was not true, the use of confession would be interdicted to the majority of mankind, and there would be no longer any remedy for sinners but a branch of a tree and a rope.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 238.)

Another maxim of the Jesuits' system, which dispenses with contrition, is in perfect harmony with the rest, and, indeed, becomes essential to their consistency. Thus Pascal's instructor states this important part of their moral theology:

"Our Fathers Fagundez, Granados, and Escobar, in the practice of our Society, have decided *that contrition is not necessary even at the hour of death; because, say they, if attrition with the sacrament did not suffice at death, it would follow that attrition would not be sufficient with the sacrament.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 239.)

"Contrition is so little necessary to the sacrament" (*i. e.*, the Sacrament of Penitence), "that it would, on the contrary, be hurtful to it, because, in effacing our sins by itself, it would leave nothing for the sacrament to accomplish. This is what our Father Valentia, that celebrated Jesuit, says. . . . *Contrition is by no means necessary to obtain the principal effect of the sacrament, but, on the contrary, it is rather an obstacle to it.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 240.)

I shall add but one extract more, in which they boldly assert that the love of God is not required for our salvation.

"Our Father Anthony Sirmond. . . . in his admirable book on the Defense of Virtue. . . . finally concludes, that we are not, in strictness, obliged to any thing more than to observe the other commandments, without any affection for God, and without giving our hearts to Him, provided that we do not hate Him. This is what he proves throughout his second treatise. . . . where he says these words: *God, in commanding us to love Him, contents Himself with our obeying Him in His other commandments. If God had said, I will destroy you, whatever obedience you may render to me, unless your heart is also mine, would this motive, in your opinion, have been properly proportioned to the end which God should and could have had in view? It is, therefore, said that we shall love God in doing His will, as if we loved Him with affection; as if the motive of charity led us to obedience. If that be really the fact, it is still better; if not, we shall not fail, nevertheless, to obey in strictness the commandment of love, by having the works; so that (behold the goodness of God!) it is not so much commanded that we love, as that we do not hate Him.*"—(*App.*, *Note* 241.)

"It is thus that our Fathers have discharged men from the *painful* obligation of loving God actually. And this doctrine is so advantageous, that our Fathers Annat, Pintereau, Le Moine, and even A. Sirmond himself, have defended it vigorously whenever it was attacked. You have only to observe this in their answers to the Moral Theology; and that of Father Pintereau will

enable you to judge of the value of this dispensation, by the price which he says that it has cost—the blood of Jesus Christ. It is the very perfection of this doctrine. You will there see that this dispensation from the difficult duty of loving God is the privilege which the law of the Gospel bestows above the law of the Jewish system."—(*App.*, *Note* 242.)

Enough has now been shown of the maxims of the Confessional, as they were laid down by the great masters of the Jesuit Society, and doubtless faithfully carried into practice, from the middle of the sixteenth to the latter part of the seventeenth century. From these the reader may fairly infer what their system must have been on the prolific subject of the sins of licentiousness. And the light which they shed on the practical administration of priestly absolution, during their long reign of power, may be easily estimated, when we remember that they far excelled all the other Orders of the Church of Rome in zeal, in strenuous activity, in splendid success, in learning, in the extent of their privileges and immunities, and in the just reliance placed upon their extraordinary resources by the popes themselves. During a full century, at least, they were looked upon by the papal governments of Europe and by the Court of Rome as the most effective barrier against the progress of the Reformation. And had they not, through the special mercy of an overruling Providence, been induced to *publish* their demoralizing system, they might have gone on with its *secret* application to the end of the world, and no man, out of their own pale, would have been the wiser.

But have we any right to charge the Jesuits with being, in the main, less scrupulous than their fellows? Assuredly there is no evidence whatever to justify such an accusation. It is certain that in the severity of their training, in implicit obedience, and in their

readiness to make any personal sacrifice for the interests of the Papacy, they excelled all others. Their own morals were as pure, to all appearance, as those of any Order in the Roman communion. The indulgences which they granted to such a fatal extent, for the gratification of their brethren, were not often needed for their own. We have seen that they justified their scheme on the express ground of necessity and expediency. They used it to recommend their Church and themselves, with equal success, to all classes of society. They sought to govern the laity by these easy and corrupt maxims, because the Reformation had broken the power of the popedom, and the old system of excommunication, followed by fire, and sword, and torture, was practically exploded every where, except in the Inquisitions of Spain, Portugal, and Goa. No man has any authority for denying that their motives were precisely what they stated Nor did it need any extraordinary sagacity to see that kings and princes, nobility and gentry, soldiers and citizens, laborers and servants, must be flattered and deluded, since they could no longer be compelled; for otherwise the dominion of the pope would be lost, and all men would claim the Protestant liberty of taking their religion from the Bible, and insist on reducing the offices of priests and bishops to their apostolic and primitive limitations, and reform their creeds by the ancient standards, and turn the monks and nuns adrift; and thus the magnificent fabric of papal supremacy and sacerdotal despotism, which had been erected with such laborious and persevering policy during ages of darkness and superstition, would fall to the ground, and bury them in its ruins.

In all this I can perceive nothing peculiar to the

position of the Jesuits. Making a reasonable allowance for occasional exceptions, it seems manifest that the same views and motives were just as likely to operate on the whole Roman hierarchy. The same interests belonged to every member of the priesthood. The same dangers threatened them all alike. And it is impossible to assign any reason for the corrupt compliances of that pre-eminent Order with the depravity of their age, which would not be as valid in the judgment of the rest, and as likely to govern the Confessional in its practical operation.

Unfortunately for the Jesuits, however, many of their maxims were utterly subversive of civil government. The shocking allowance of false oaths, under the plea of mental reservation, was a mortal blow to the administration of justice. The atrocious permission of homicide, to prevent the loss of reputation or property, was directly hostile to the safety of every community. These principles could not be tolerated by the rulers of the State with any regard to the public welfare. And therefore the Jesuits, who had made themselves responsible by their avowal, fell under universal suspicion and obloquy. The Jansenists, I doubt not, were honest in their efforts to expose them. Of the sincerity of Pascal and some of his coadjutors, there can be no question. But if the reigning sovereigns and their ministers in the various papal countries had not taken the alarm, and expelled the Jesuits, the popes and cardinals of Rome would have given themselves little concern about the complaints of their other enemies. This is sufficiently manifest from the fact that while the Jansenists were promptly condemned by two papal bulls, the first of which was issued in A.D. 1653, and the second only three years afterward, on the score of certain

alleged errors in the doctrine of predestination, the Jesuits, although expelled by every Roman Catholic government in Europe, were sustained by the papal partiality until 1673, and then condemned with the greatest reluctance, and only because, as Ganganelli declared, "It was better to sacrifice the Jesuits than live in constant dispute with the kings." Nothing can prove more plainly that their system was not regarded by the pontiffs as objectionable in itself, and that the rulers of the Roman hierarchy were far more hostile to the austere pretensions of the Jansenists than to the accommodating pliancy of the ingenious scheme which disposed of sin with so much ease by the doctrines of Probability and Intention.

For my own part, therefore, I have no doubt that the maxims of the Jesuits were a fair exponent of the general administration of the Confessional throughout the whole Roman communion. I admit the statement of Pascal, that they did not expressly design to corrupt mankind, that they were always ready to recommend the strictest morality to the few who preferred it, and that they only indulged the mass of sin among the majority under the assumed expediency or necessity of accommodation. And such, I presume, is still, and always will be, the practical operation of the system. But it is very certain that the frankness with which they formerly published their maxims will never be exhibited again. The Christian world can not expect the repetition of an avowal which was followed by such troublesome consequences. And yet the reasons by which their policy was supposed to be justified in the seventeenth century have lost none of their force. Nor is it possible for human ingenuity to imagine why the Confessional should now be administered on better or purer principles. True, in-

deed, the advocate of Rome may amuse the crafty and deceive the credulous by saying that the papal bull which condemned the sixty-five erroneous propositions of the Jesuits, in A.D. 1673, is a sufficient guard against their restoration. A powerful guard assuredly! when we have already seen how easily they evaded the canons and papal bulls of previous centuries, and with what admirable coolness they laid down the comprehensive rule THAT THE LAWS OF THE CHURCH LOSE THEIR FORCE WHEN MEN NO LONGER OBSERVE THEM!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND AND IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE rise and progress of the Confessional have now been traced from the days of the apostles to the latter part of the seventeenth century. We have seen that the modern doctrine of the Church of Rome was still unknown, until the fourth Council of Lateran sanctioned the despotic scheme of Pope Innocent III., by which auricular confession and private absolution were required of all persons, without exception, at least once a year, under the penalty of virtual excommunication. That this new and stringent enactment was the product of expediency, dictated by the determination of the pontiff and priesthood to secure their absolute power over the nations in that palmy age of papal supremacy, is manifest from its history; for at this time the domination of Rome was in danger from the progress of a strong opposition. The Albi-

genses and Waldenses had become very numerous in the South of France, under the protection of the Counts of Thoulouse and Foix. The pope had actually published a crusade against them six years before. Indulgences had been liberally promised to all who should enlist in this "holy war" of the Church, and vast armies, under the renowned Simon de Montfort, had been engaged in destroying the unhappy "heretics" with fire and sword, and every conceivable method of cruel barbarity. Yet still a host of them remained, who continued to declaim against the pope, the monks and nuns, the ignorance and vices of the clergy, the superstitions and impostures connected with the false worship of the Virgin and the saints, and all the other numerous corruptions of the papal system. And their opinions were gaining ground with such success, that the hierarchy of Rome thought it necessary to exert the utmost energy for their total extirpation.

To this end, the pontiff convened the fourth Council of Lateran, and used all his influence to render it the most numerous and imposing body of the kind which had ever met together. It consisted of four hundred and twelve bishops, of whom seventy-one were primates or metropolitans; eight hundred abbots and priors, besides a large number of proxies for absentees; the embassadors of the emperors of Germany and Constantinople, of the kings of Sicily, France, England, Hungary, Jerusalem, Cyprus, Arragon, and many other sovereigns; together with the patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem, the patriarch of the Maronites, and legates from the patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria. This immense body of dignitaries assembled in the Church of St. John Lateran at Rome, formerly the Church of the famous Constantine. The

Council was opened in due pomp and form, and sat from the 11th to the 30th of November, A.D. 1215. And although the main objects for which it had been ostensibly summoned were the recovery of the Holy Land from the Saracens, and the reformation of the Church, yet the chief design of its legislation proved to be the extirpation of heresy. For this purpose, not only was it enjoined to make the strictest inquiry after heretics, with severe penalties of confiscation, banishment, &c., but the novel expedient was adopted of *enforced annual confession*, as the most reliable method of preventing the progress of ecclesiastical rebellion: since by this means each individual of the laity was compelled to pass, once in every year, through the hands of the priest, who could thus effectually ascertain whether any one had tampered with his allegiance to popery. That this was a perfect innovation, is acknowledged by Fleury himself. "C'est le premier canon que je sçache," saith he, "qui à ordonné generalement la confession sacramentelle; et il y avoit raison particuliere de le faire alors, à cause des erreurs des Albigeois et des Vaudois touchant le sacrament de penitence."* "*This is the first law that I know, which ordained a general sacramental confession, and there was a particular reason for enacting it at that time, on account of the errors of the Albigenses and the Waldenses concerning the sacrament of penitence.*"

We must doubtless make some allowance for the phraseology of our historian, whose Romanism has here led him to attempt a little mystification; for it is quite evident that the errors of heresy could never justify the Church in changing her own system, by laying a new burden on her people, and attaching a

* Histoire Ecclesiastique, tome xvi., p. 375.

perilous increase of secret prerogative to her priests, against the whole doctrine and practice of antiquity. But he frankly admits that it was a complete novelty, introduced on account of the Albigenses and Waldenses; and for these, which are the important facts of the case, his authority is conclusive in our favor.

Thus, then, we have the real history of this monstrous innovation. The arguments now advanced to give it a semblance of truth, and to present it as the proper instrumentality for obtaining the pardon of sin and preparing the faithful for the reception of the Eucharist, were not suggested by the Council, but were gotten up afterward, as we have seen, by the schoolmen, of whom "the angelic Doctor," Thomas Aquinas, was the most distinguished. And in order to sustain them in better consistency with the sacramental obligation, now first imposed, the old forms of prayer, that God would absolve the penitent, were not altogether abandoned, but the new form of "I absolve thee" was boldly introduced, and to this was attached the whole force of the absolution. I have already exhibited the proofs of this unhappy change, and have shown that it was not accomplished without complaint and remonstrance. But the power of the papacy and the zeal of the schoolmen soon conquered this feeble opposition, and the murmurers were silenced with little difficulty. The novel addition was in favor of priestly despotism. It was a common cause among the hierarchy, for a common benefit. The masses were profoundly ignorant. The papal scepter bore universal sway. Darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people. And thus the blow was successfully struck against the last remaining wreck of Christian liberty, and the power of every priest was fastened upon the soul and conscience of his trembling suppliants, and

his secret and irresponsible judgments were henceforth to be received by all his flock without exception as THE VOICE OF GOD!

Such being the time, the occasion, and the motives for the adoption of this modern form of absolution, I can not but lament that our noble Reformers of England suffered it to remain in any part of their established offices, notwithstanding they only allowed it to be used at the earnest desire of individuals whose minds might be depressed by the weight of some special sin. In all things else they determined to be guided by the pure doctrines of the Scriptures and the practice of the primitive Church. Why, it may be asked, did they deviate from their rule in this particular? To this question a two-fold answer may be given.

In the first place, they may have been influenced by a benevolent disposition to favor the feelings and habits of a large proportion of the nation, in whose judgment the principles of the Reformation had not yet become fully established, and who, therefore, whenever their minds became alarmed and dejected, might naturally long after their accustomed course, and derive a certain comfort from hearing the old and familiar words of positive personal absolution. To accommodate the prejudices of these weak brethren, therefore, the Reformers may have thought it best to allow this indulgence to the few who might specially ask for it. They may have believed that such a course was justified by the policy of the apostles, who, according to the opinion of some of the ancient fathers, permitted the continuance of the ceremonial law after it had ceased to be absolutely binding, for the sake of their Israelitish brethren. And yet it seems manifest that the cases were by no means analogous; for

the ceremonial law had been appointed for the Jewish people by express divine authority, and had never been *formally* repealed. Whereas the Confessional, with its new assumption of private priestly prerogative, was without a vestige of apostolic or primitive sanction, and was rather to be regarded as a system of delusion, perilous to the conscience of the pastor, and dangerous to the souls of his flock. But the Reformers had been long accustomed to this mode of administering absolution. They doubtless anticipated the result, that, by making its use to depend entirely on the voluntary request of the laity, it would soon die away. And meanwhile, in order to facilitate the conversion of Romanists, and prevent their thinking that they would lose any real privilege in coming to a pure Church, they determined to tolerate it in this optional shape, which still continues.

The second answer to the question, however, may be more satisfactory, namely, that the use of private confession and absolution, in certain cases, was allowed, not to accommodate the habits of Romanists, but in order to agree as far as possible with the system of the German Reformers, Luther and Melancthon; for they had retained a far closer resemblance to the Roman discipline in this matter. They called absolution a sacrament, and required auricular confession and priestly absolution of every one, as a regular preparative for the Eucharist; although they abolished the rule which authorized the priest to act as an inquisitor, and severely denounced the whole Romish doctrine concerning works of penance or satisfaction.

But it may, perhaps, be more acceptable to the reader if I state these points of distinction in their own words. Thus, then, we read in the Catechism

composed by Melancthon for the youth of the Lutheran Churches, viz.:

"*What is a Sacrament?*

"It is properly a ceremony instituted in the Gospel, to which is added a Gospel promise.

"*How many are they?*

"Three are rightly enumerated: Baptism, ABSOLUTION, and the Lord's Supper."—(*App.*, *Note* 243.)

Here, therefore, we find that the German Reformers included absolution among the sacraments, in which neither Calvin nor Zuingle, nor yet our Mother Church of England, agreed with them. And in this I have already shown that our system is justified by the ancients, and that the modern doctrine had no existence in Christendom before the thirteenth century.

The celebrated Confession of Augsburg presents the Lutheran sentiment on the subject in the following terms:

"OF CONFESSION.

"Confession in the Churches is not abolished with us. For it is not our custom that the body of the Lord should be administered, except to those who have previously been examined and absolved. . . . The power of the keys is honored and commemorated, how much consolation it affords to alarmed consciences, and how God requires faith, in order that we may believe in that absolution as in a voice sounding from heaven, and that this faith may attain to Christ, and receive the remission of sins."—(*App.*, *Note* 244.)

"But our ministers teach concerning confession, that the enumeration of offenses is not necessary, nor are consciences to be burdened with the care of numbering all sins, because the reciting of all our transgressions is impossible, as the Psalmist testifies. *Who understandeth his offenses?* So likewise Jeremiah, *The heart of man is depraved and inscrutable.* Because if no sins could be remitted unless they have been rehearsed, the consciences of men could never rest, since there are very many sins which they neither discern nor are able to remember. The ancient writers also bear witness that this enumeration is not necessary. For in the Decretals, Chrysostom is

quoted, who speaks thus: 'I do not say to thee that thou shouldst betray thyself in public, nor accuse thyself before others; but I wish thee to obey the prophet, saying, *Reveal thy way before God*. Therefore confess thy sins to God, the true Judge, with prayer. Declare thy sins not with the tongue, but with the memory of thy conscience,' &c. And the gloss concerning penitence acknowledges that confession is of human law. Nevertheless, confession is retained among as, as well on account of the exceeding great benefit of absolution as for other advantages to the conscience."—(*App.*, *Note* 245.)

In the larger form of the same Declaration of Faith, presented by the Protestant princes before the Diet of Worms, their doctrine is thus expressed, viz.:

"Our ministers teach that private absolution is to be retained in the Churches, and they exalt its dignity and the power of the keys with true and most ample praises, inasmuch as this power of the keys administers the Gospel not only generically to all, but privately to each singly."—(*App.*, *Note* 246.)

The parts of penitence are stated by Melancthon in his Catechism, to be "two, namely, Contrition and Faith."—(*App.*, *Note* 247.) And he rejects the Roman doctrine of Satisfaction altogether, as follows:

"The custom of satisfactions is to be condemned, and the doctrine of satisfactions is to be rejected; for we must, above all things, take care that the doctrine of free acceptance and of faith be not overthrown. Let this truth shine forth in the Churches, that the remission of guilt and eternal punishment is granted freely for the sake of Christ; that Christ is the satisfaction and the sacrifice for our sins; that no works of ours can be a satisfaction for our sins."—(*App.*, *Note* 248.)

And in the famous Apology for the Augsburg Confession, we have the following burst of indignant feeling, after an examination of the attempt made by the Romish theologians to prove their doctrine from the Scriptures, viz.:

"May God confound those impious sophists, so wickedly distorting the Word of God to support their most empty dreams! What good man can help being moved at such indignity? Christ saith, Repent. The apostles preach repentance. Therefore

eternal punishments are compensated by our satisfactions! Therefore the keys have authority to remit part of the pains of purgatory! Therefore satisfactions redeem the pains of purgatory! Who has taught these asses such logic as this?"—(*App.*, *Note* 249.)

These extracts may suffice to show that the Lutheran Churches held fast the sacramental theory, and the practice of making auricular confession and private absolution the regular preparative for the administration of the Eucharist, although they reprobated the other parts of the Roman system. And hence it has been supposed, with much reason, that notwithstanding our English Reformers had all the authority of Scripture and the primitive Church in their favor, proving that absolution, *per se*, was not a sacrament, and that auricular confession, being a mere modern innovation, ought not to be *enjoined* on any man, yet they thought it best to leave a portion of the former discipline *discretionary*, in order to accommodate their Lutheran friends; so that any of them who might desire to avail himself of the priestly power of private absolution, either before the communion, or at the approach of death, should be *indulged, on special request*, with its administration.

Now either of these motives may have been the true one; and both may have operated in the same direction, since it is obvious that there was no incompatibility between them. But however this may have been, it is none the less manifest that there is no warrant for the practice, either in the Word of God or in the early Fathers and Councils. And, therefore, while we ought to make the largest allowance for the peculiar difficulties of our admirable Reformers, and frankly acknowledge that in their circumstances the argument of expediency was plausible, yet it is hardly to be doubted that they carried the policy of accom-

modation farther than their general principles can fairly justify, and certainly farther than they would have approved, if they had lived at the close of the eighteenth instead of the first half of the sixteenth century.

When, therefore, after the Revolutionary war was ended, our American Church, in the order of divine Providence, obtained the Episcopal succession from our venerated Mother of England, and it became necessary to revise the Liturgy and offices of the Prayer-Book, why should not our excellent predecessors have availed themselves of the opportunity to set aside this only relic of Romanism, and to recur at once to the unadulterated simplicity of the primitive and apostolic system? True, it has been said that we received the succession on the express assurance that "no essential departure was designed from the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the English Church." And the fact is unquestionable. But can any one seriously imagine that the private absolution which our venerable Mother had thus permitted to remain was regarded, either by her bishops or by ours, as an *essential* matter? Certain it is that our bishops did not so consider it, as their action proves. And it is equally certain that the English bishops agreed with them, because none of the ritualists of our Mother Church have ever ascribed to their private form any greater efficacy than belongs to the general and public absolution of the Liturgy; and Wheatley, one of the most approved among them, even attributes less; considering the words "I absolve thee" as conveying nothing beyond an absolution from *Church censures*, which may have been merited, although they had not been actually imposed. I grant, indeed, that the Rev. Mr. Maskell, in his late book upon the subject, labors

very learnedly to prove that this peculiar prerogative of the priest to receive private confession and convey to each individual the direct remission of sin, *is essential* to every true Church, and, therefore, that the custom of using it ought to be restored universally. But he is obliged to acknowledge that he differs in this opinion from all the standard authors of English theology, and that the practical appliance of the power is not necessary to any man's salvation.

It has been argued, nevertheless, that notwithstanding our American Church has thus used her undoubted right to cast aside this only trace of Roman innovation, yet, inasmuch as it was retained by the Church of England, it should still be considered as virtually belonging to *our* system! But this, I must frankly say, is a most unwarrantable conclusion. For surely, if such an assumption were allowed, it would prove that our revision of the Prayer-Book was no revision at all; that our legislation in adopting it had no binding force; that we stand, to all intents and purposes, precisely where we stood before the Revolution; that our General Convention, our Constitution, our Canons, our Liturgy, and our Offices are all without authority, whenever any of our clergy may think fit to suppose that they vary, in some *essential* matter, from the formularies of our venerable and venerated Mother Church of England! Truly this idea seems to my mind so perfectly extravagant, that I am at a loss for proper terms to express my sense of its disorganizing character. Perhaps, however, it may be well to remind those who have become unsettled by it, that it is directly opposed to three plain provisions in our system. For,

1. In the first place, it is required by the seventh Article of our General Constitution, that no person

shall be ordained until he has subscribed the following declaration:

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation: and *I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrines and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.*"

2. Secondly, in the Ordination Service for the Priesthood, one of the interrogatories is as follows:

"Will you give your faithful diligence, always so *to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the discipline of Christ*, as the Lord hath commanded, *and as this Church hath received the same*, according to the commandments of God; so that you may *teach the people* committed to your cure and charge, with all diligence *to keep and observe the same?*" To which the candidate replies, "I will so do, by the help of the Lord."

3. And thirdly, in the consecration of bishops, the limitation appears again, in these words:

"Will you maintain and set forward, as much as shall lie in you, quietness, love, and peace among all men; and *diligently exercise such discipline*, as by the authority of God's Word, and *by the order of this Church*, is committed to you?

"*Answer.* I will so do, by the help of God."

Here are the distinct boundaries of the official powers with which the candidates for the priestly and episcopal functions are clothed in Ordination. And therefore, as the right to go beyond them has NEVER BEEN CONFERRED by the Church, it is manifest that it can NEVER BE LAWFULLY EXERCISED BY HER AUTHORITY.

In justice to our venerable Mother Church, however, it ought to be added, that the form which we

have laid aside is practically regarded as little more than a dead letter among the great mass of our English brethren. The notion of the Rev. Mr. Maskell was rejected by his own diocesan, the eminent Bishop of Exeter, and called forth, at the time of its announcement, a strong remonstrance from the body of the clergy. The good old forms of declaratory and precatory absolution, which were established in the primitive days of martyrdom, are the only forms in general use. And I venture to predict that the modern Roman innovation of "I absolve thee," retained at first as a mere matter of accommodation, under peculiar circumstances which have long since passed away, will be expunged from the Prayer-Book of our Mother Church, if she should ever be enabled to undertake the work of revising her Liturgy.

I mean not, indeed, to say that there are none among the mighty host of the English clergy who hold a different opinion. It is notorious, on the contrary, that a small party of her divines, distinguished for their learning and ability, and yet more for their indefatigable zeal, have displayed, of late years, a strange yearning toward the doctrine and customs of the Roman Church, and a consequent determination to improve, as far as possible, the means which they suppose to exist for introducing the Confessional. To such as these the form which we have set aside affords, of course, a convenient instrument, and they would doubtless lament its loss as a grievous calamity. There are a few most estimable men within our own immediate pale who sympathize with this class, and I am far from intending to impeach the sincerity and good intentions which urge them to inculcate their peculiar sentiments. But the vast majority of the Church in England and the United States are inflex-

ibly opposed to this perilous innovation. They regard the hope of improving the piety of the people by such means as perfectly delusive. And therefore, standing on the firm ground of scriptural truth and apostolic example, sustained by the testimony of history, and supported by the established opinions and habits of the laity, they can not view the romantic enterprise of these innovators with any alarm for the Church, however they may lament the unhappy instability of their misguided brethren.

CHAPTER XX.

PRESENT STATE OF THE ROMAN CONFESSIONAL.

It is my duty, before I close my humble volume, to present the form in which the Confessional appears, according to its most favorable aspect, in the language of the Romanists themselves. And this I shall do from the pages of the Ursuline Manual, which is probably the most skillfully prepared work of its kind in general use, and calculated to make the most favorable impression on an incautious or ill-informed Protestant reader. I quote from the New York edition of 1844.

Although it sets forth and recommends, at great length, the advantages of contrition, as a preparative for confession, yet the Council of Trent obliges its authors to allow the sufficiency of attrition, in the following words:

"The second kind of sorrow for sin is called *attrition*, and is much inferior to contrition, both in its

causes and in its effects. It is the regret of a slave, who returns to a master whose chastisement he fears, or of a child, who regrets having forfeited a claim to the possessions of his father. It is generally produced either by a sense of the baseness of sin in itself, or, more commonly, by a fear of hell or the loss of heaven. If attrition be accompanied by a hope of pardon, if it exclude the will of sinning again, it is an impulse of the Holy Ghost, and a gift of God, which disposes the sinner for the happiness of perfect reconciliation with God in the tribunal of penance."*

The reader, I trust, has not forgotten the Jesuit doctrine which dispenses with the *painful and difficult* duty of the love of God. And here he will find it fully justified. For while contrition is recommended, yet *attrition* will suffice, inasmuch as it *disposes the sinner for the happiness of perfect reconciliation with God in the tribunal of penance.* And what is this attrition? By the very definition given, it is nothing more than a slavish fear, or a selfish apprehension of the loss of future bliss, or of the infliction of future punishment. It must, indeed, be attended by the *hope of pardon*, and it must *exclude the will of sinning again.* But "the slave who returns to a master, whose chastisement he fears," may well hope for pardon, when he is told that his master will ask for nothing beyond the resolution to submit, and the will to avoid a repetition of the offense which exposes him to severe correction. And it is obvious that neither of these demands a particle of love, since they are only set forth in connection with fear and a prudent regard to personal safety. Hence we have in this short passage an evidently reluctant, but plain and clear admission, that the power of the priest in

* Ursuline Manual, p. 161.

the tribunal of penance is sufficient to obtain for the sinner "the happiness of perfect reconciliation with God," independently of the love of the Lord, and without that true contrition which love alone inspires. And yet the Apostle John saith, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love."* And St. Paul proclaims, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha."†

The order to be pursued in the work of the Confessional, according to the Ursuline Manual, is as follows:

"On entering the Confessional, place yourself in spirit at the feet of Jesus Christ" (*kneeling down at the side of your ghostly father*, as it is stated in "The Garden of the Soul"), and "begin by making the sign of the cross, saying, 'Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.' When the priest has said" (in Latin of course), "'May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips, that you may sincerely and candidly declare all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen,' say the Confiteor as follows:"‡

"I confess to the Almighty God, to the blessed Virgin Mary, to the blessed Michael the Archangel, to the blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the saints in heaven, and to you, my father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.' At these words you should bow your head and penitently strike your breast; then say how long it has been since your last confession; secondly, whether you were absolved and have communicated; and, thirdly, whether you have performed your penance. Then begin your

* 1 John, iv., 8. † 1 Cor., xvi., 22. ‡ Ursuline Manual, p. 186,

confession, by accusing yourself of any sin which might have been forgotten in your last confession, or any faults committed in approaching that sacrament. After which, proceed to the accusation of your other sins, beginning with those which you have most repugnance to mention,"* &c.

"When you have accused yourself of all your sins, and submitted any doubts on your mind to the opinion of your director, conclude your confession in the following form: 'For these and all the sins of my life I am most heartily sorry, humbly beg pardon of God, and penance and absolution of you, my father;' then immediately bowing your head, finish the Confiteor as follows: 'Therefore I beseech the blessed Virgin Mary, the blessed Michael the Archangel, the blessed St. John the Baptist, the holy Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, all the saints in heaven, and you, my father, to pray to God for me.' The priest then says" (in Latin), "'May the Almighty God be merciful to you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to everlasting life. May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, absolution, and full remission of all your sins.'"†

Here, of course, the priest puts whatever questions he may think proper, and nearly sixteen pages of the book are occupied with a list of topics for previous self-examination,‡ on all of which the confessor may interrogate the penitent according to his discretion. After this, he imposes such penance as he deems fit, and then the absolution is to be given in the following form, pronounced in Latin:

"May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee from every bond of excommunication and interdict, as far as I have power and thou hast need. *I therefore do*

* Ursuline Manual, p. 186–7. † Ibid., p. 187. ‡ Ibid., p. 143–159.

absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. *May the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints; may whatever good thou shalt do, or whatever evil thou shalt suffer, be to thee unto the remission of thy sins, the increase of grace, and the recompense of life everlasting.* Amen."*

"When you leave the Confessional, do not disturb your mind by examining whether you have confessed well, or have forgotten any of your sins, but rest assured that if you made your confession with sincerity and the other requisite dispositions, you are, according to the express decision of the Council of Trent, *fully absolved* from every sin which you may have omitted through forgetfulness, *even though it were mortal.*"†

The precise period at which these forms were fixed in their present shape it is perhaps impossible to ascertain. But the reader has had positive proof, from the forms of confession used in the ninth and tenth centuries, that there was nothing like them known at that time; and the probability is that the last arrangement was settled somewhere between the Council of Lateran and the Council of Trent, or from the middle of the thirteenth to the commencement of the sixteenth centuries. But they exhibit a curious and interesting specimen of the mode in which the Church of Rome has acted in every part of her system, by continuing the old and primitive truth with the utmost tenacity, while she effectually opposed it by some modern innovation. A brief analysis of the formularies just cited will explain my meaning.

First, then, the reader will remember that in the

* Ursuline Manual, p. 188. † Ibid., p. 188.

primitive Church the penitent was obliged to make his confession not only to God and to the priests, but also *to the saints*, that is, to his faithful brethren; all who were communicants being then called saints, or holy persons, as we read in the epistles of St. Paul, and in the writings of the early fathers. Now the modern Romanists have carefully preserved this principle, only with one important difference, viz., that as they have long given the title of saints exclusively to those departed worthies whom they suppose to be in glory, therefore they have substituted, for the living communicants of the primitive ages, the Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, and St. Paul, and all the other *saints of the Calendar*, and these the modern penitent now asks to pray for him, just as the ancient penitent besought his brethren to grant him the benefit of their intercessions.

Secondly, we have seen that the penitent in the primitive Church was always separated from the communion, and therefore absolution in his case signified the loosing him from the censures of the Church, in order to restore him to the society and fellowship of the faithful. And here, also, the modern confessor retains the words of the ancient form, saying, "May our Lord Jesus Christ *absolve thee from every bond of excommunication and interdict*, as far as I have power and thou hast need," although there is neither excommunication nor interdict to justify it.

Thirdly, we have seen that the old forms were all in the language of prayer that God would absolve the sinner. And the modern Church of Rome still keeps up the same rule, in no less than three places; while she brings in, at the close, her innovation of "*I absolve thee*," in which the Council of Trent is careful to place the whole force of sacramental absolution.

Fourthly, the primitive Church, in the prayer for the remission of sins, relied solely on "the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ," looking to His blessed atoning sacrifice as the only ground of her hope and consolation. And the modern Church of Rome retains this likewise, while she unites with it, in the same breath, her pestilent inventions, by saying, "May the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the blessed Virgin and of all the saints; may whatever good thou shalt do, or whatever evil thou shalt suffer, be to thee unto the remission of thy sins, the increase of grace, and the recompense of life everlasting."

The Romanist can not see that in the first of these abuses he is obliged to commit an act of mental idolatry, by invoking the departed saints as if they were present; when he ought to know that it is impossible they should be able to hear the supplications addressed to them all over the world, unless they possess the divine attribute of ubiquity. But no created being can possess the attributes of the Creator. And hence the homage which requires us to invest the saints with the incommunicable Omnipresence of the Deity, involves the gravest offense against the majesty of that God who has said, "I WILL NOT GIVE MY GLORY TO ANOTHER."

The second of these abuses can not be called a sin so much as an irreverent absurdity. For what else is it to ask the Lord that He will "absolve the sinner from every bond of excommunication and interdict," when no such sentence has been pronounced or even intended against him?

The third involves an equally gross and yet more offensive incongruity. For the priest first prays that THE LORD would absolve the sinner, and then pronounces "I ABSOLVE THEE," while the Catechism of Trent expressly declares that the prayers which ac-

company the form "*are not deemed necessary*," but that the power with which the priest is invested is that which "*really absolves from sin.*"* It is not thus that the primitive Christians appealed to the divine majesty; nor is it thus that we act, as when, in baptism, we first pray that God would baptize the candidate with the Holy Spirit, and then proceed to apply the outward element of water, saying, "I baptize thee." For here we do not ask the Almighty to perform *the ministerial act* which He has committed to His servants, but we beseech Him to do the *spiritual work* which we can not do, and yet without which all our ministry amounts to nothing. With the Roman priest, however, this reasoning has no force, since he can see no inconsistency in beseeching the Lord to do *the very same thing* which he is about to do himself, and then gravely telling us that the prayer is an unnecessary form, while it is *his power* which confers the real blessing of absolution.

And the fourth abuse is of a similar character; for here the atoning sacrifice of Christ is bound up in the same sentence with the merits of the Virgin and the saints, and even with the good works and sufferings of the sinner himself, as the procuring cause of the remission of his sins, the increase of grace, and the reward of life everlasting! How strange the blindness which can not see the impiety of such a conjunction! How strange! that the Lord, who trod the wine-press of His Father's wrath ALONE; who is ALONE the way, the truth, and the life; whose blood ALONE cleanseth from all sin; who ALONE has the keys of death and hell; who ALONE is our great High-priest, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; who ALONE is the fullness of the Godhead bodily, the

* Ursuline Manual, p. 242.

brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His Person; who ALONE has power on earth to forgive sins—that HE should have His divine prerogative thus shared, as if in partnership, with the Virgin and the saints, and even with the paltry works and ordinary trials of the sinner; while those who should abhor, applaud the profanation!

But such is Romanism. All the original truths of divine revelation, the Scriptures, the creeds, and the primitive forms of the purest ages, are displayed on the one side by that treacherous Church, while on the other she presents an awful mass of innovations, borrowed from every source of superstition, will-worship, and false expediency, and to these she binds her subjects, and on these she erects her papal throne, and requires all men to bow down before her assumed infallibility. In the plenitude of her usurped dominion, she erects a new tribunal for the remission of sins, and creates new objects of worship, and establishes new articles of faith, and makes new sacraments, and proclaims a new kind of empire in the unseen world, and affects a new government over the souls of the departed, and places new saints in heaven, and invents new curses for all who presume to dispute her title to be the sovereign mistress of the world. And thus she stands, a mystery of contradictions. A true Church, by reason of the apostolic system which she still retains, and yet a false Church, by reason of her fraudulent assumptions. The spouse of Christ through her original covenant of faith, and yet a foul adulteress through her numerous acts of infidelity against her Lord and Master. A patroness of sanctity, and yet indulgent to licentiousness. An adorer of benevolence, and yet a tyrant persecutor. A worshiper of charity, and yet a cruel dispenser of

dungeons, and racks, and flames. Full of attraction to the artist, the musician, the architect, the sculptor, the poet, the men and women of romantic tastes and sentiment; and yet far more full of repulsion to the enlightened followers of the Word of God, who know how to reverence that solemn warning of the Almighty Redeemer: "IN VAIN THEY DO WORSHIP ME, TEACHING FOR DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN."

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

THE task which I proposed at the commencement is done, and I am conscious that it is done imperfectly. But I trust that my pledge has been redeemed, and that the reader has been enabled to form, so far as the nature of the subject allowed, a clear historical view of the rise, progress, consummation, and character of the Confessional.

My object has been to treat the topic with a view to its avowed and authoritative principles, and by no means with respect to its scandalous details. For this reason, I have taken no notice even of the Bull of Paul IV., *contra solicitantes;* nor of the disclosures of Llorente in his history of the Inquisition; nor of the alarming and atrocious offenses published by the various priests who have from time to time abandoned the Roman communion. Doubtless a different course in this respect might have made my work far more interesting to many readers, but it would not have shed any light on the main question which

I proposed, nor should I have felt satisfied in merely repeating what is just as accessible to every other person as it is to me. In a word, I wished to consider the growth and character of the confessional as a skillfully-concocted SYSTEM OF PRIESTLY POWER, involving serious and dangerous errors of doctrine and of discipline, but not as a convenient instrument for individual transgression. Therefore I have generally confined myself to those documents which were of the highest and most responsible kind, the fathers, the councils, the Roman theologians and historians, and have endeavored to put upon them all the same fair and reasonable construction.

For it is far from my desire to depreciate the priesthood or the members of the Church of Rome in Protestant countries, either as men or citizens, when compared with the average standard around them. Conscientiously and irreconcilably opposed as I am to their religious system, and believing that its proper tendency, on the broad scale of general experience, is decidedly unfavorable to morality, I am yet none the less persuaded that, wherever it is found transplanted to a Protestant soil, the product of the combined influences under which it works is beneficially affected and happily improved. Nor have I any doubt that there always have been, and now are, many thousands in that corrupt communion throughout the world, whose hearts have turned away with dislike or with indifference from the errors and superstitions of their Church; who have cherished, through the grace of God, only those doctrines which are true, and whose names might justly claim a lofty rank among the brightest of their race for intelligence and virtue.

But, dismissing this topic, I would conclude by pre-

senting to my own immediate brethren in the faith a few remarks, which I trust will not be deemed unworthy of their attention.

Our venerable Mother Church of England, in the Preface to her Commination Service, has recorded a desire for the restoration of the ancient discipline; and, in the *Reformatio Legum*, prepared by Cranmer and others as a code of ecclesiastical law, under Edward VI., there was an interesting system laid down for the excommunication and restoration of offenders, which would probably have been formally established by Parliament, if the death of the youthful monarch, followed by the accession of Queen Mary, had not prevented all further movements in that direction.

But it may be doubted whether any measure of the kind could be attempted in our day with a prospect of success; and it is by no means clear that the Church would gain any thing by the change, even if it were practicable. In order, however, that we may have a distinct view of the nature of the subject, let us briefly consider the true character of the apostolic system.

Our divine Redeemer expressly saith, "My kingdom is not of this world." Being a spiritual society, therefore, the Church can only claim obedience through the conscience of her members, and can have no proper power to impose any system of *physical punishment* or *bodily mortification* upon those whom she separates from her communion. We read of no such penal inflictions among the acts or precepts of the apostles; nor did the power of the keys which was delivered to them, and through them to their successors, involve the imposition of any penitential discipline. This will be manifest when we consider that

the exercise of this power was limited to the following particulars:

First, they opened the Gospel system to sinners by the key of knowledge, proclaiming repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Next, when their hearers were converted and believed, they admitted them to the covenant of adoption and the privileges of the Church by the key of baptism; to which sacrament, when rightly received and administered, was attached the remission of sins.

Thirdly, they prepared them for the communion by the key of confirmation—the "laying on of hands," which some have called the priesthood of the laity.

Fourthly, they opened to them, as it were, the inner chamber of sacramental sanctity by the key of the Eucharistic Feast.

Fifthly, if any member of the Church proved himself unworthy, by gross and manifest transgression against the laws of the spiritual kingdom, the apostles excluded him from the communion and society of his brethren by the key of discipline. And of this we have two sorts of examples: the one mentioned in the first Epistle to the Corinthians (ch. v.), for the sin of incest; the other, as in the first Epistle to Timothy (ch. i.), where St. Paul saith that he had delivered the heretics Hymeneus and Alexander "unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme." For as all men are by nature the subjects of Satan, who is the god of this world; and as, of course, when they became the subjects of Christ in baptism, they were obliged to renounce the devil and all his works, therefore it followed of necessity, that when they were altogether driven from the Church, and its doors were closed against them, they were considered as being replaced under the yoke of their former master, whom

their pertinacious rebellion against the truth had sufficiently proved that they were still resolved to follow.

Lastly, whenever the offender could show, by a long course of repentance and reformation, that he was sincerely contrite and spiritually changed, and the Church was satisfied that he ought to be restored, the keys were used again for his readmission.

Now it was in these several modes, and in no other, that the apostles applied the keys of the Church, the kingdom of heaven; and their power was ministerial rather than judicial, because it was only exercised in obedience to the commands of Christ. True, it may be said that their decision on all these subjects required an exercise of judgment, and so indeed it did; just as the servant who invites men to his master's house on the occasion of an earthly feast, and tells them the rules of the entertainment, and admits those who accept the call, and regulates their movements according to the prescribed directions, and puts out of doors any that prove to be unruly, must exercise some judgment in order that he may perform his duties in such a manner as his employer may approve. Nevertheless, we style this sort of judgment *ministerial*, and not *judicial*, because it is directed simply to the doing that which is specifically required by a superior. And therefore the officers of the Church are called *ministers* or *servants*, their power being strictly limited to what their Lord commands, and its exercise being immediately dependent on the Word and the Spirit of Him from whom their commission comes, and to whom they are directly accountable. Thus we have seen how the old fathers call even their imposing of penitential discipline *a ministry;* and thus, also, the dignity and solemnity of the office are best secured, when it is considered that it is not so

much the ministers of Christ who act, as Christ Himself who acts through their agency.

Now all this applies directly to the ministry of our own day, to whom it has descended from the apostles in an unbroken succession. We also preach, baptize, confirm, administer the eucharist, suspend, excommunicate, and restore the penitent, just as the apostolic Church exercised its powers in the fresh purity of its spiritual organization. I say not that we discharge these sacred functions with the same zeal, faith, energy, or devotion. God forbid that I should claim an equality in these respects for our degenerate age! But I say that the *system*, in all its main and important features, is precisely the same; and it is the *system only* which is in question.

What, therefore, should we gain, supposing it were in our power, by establishing the customary rule of public penitence, even as it existed in the time of Tertullian? For then a whole century had elapsed since the death of the last of the apostles, and many new arrangements may have sprung up during three generations, while the substance of the faith remained unchanged. Or what should we accomplish by re-enacting the penitential canons of the primitive Church? Assuredly these were not apostolic, since there is not the slightest hint in Scripture of a fixed code prescribing measured periods of time for certain offenses, and refusing to receive some transgressors, even at the hour of death, like that enacted by the Council of Elvira. Before the holding of that Council in A.D. 313, it seems to have been discretionary with each bishop to determine when a penitent should be allowed, if at all, to return to the Communion. From the very nature of the case, it is obvious that the true inquiry on such occasions should always have been, not *how*

long the sinner had been separated from his brethren, but whether he was *truly penitent and thoroughly reformed*, so that the Church could place confidence in his sincerity and perseverance for the time to come. And it is evident that this was not a matter to be determined by the mere lapse of months or years, but rather by the knowledge of the man, and by a strict observation of his conduct and his character.

As to the particular mode by which the contrition of the penitent was outwardly manifested in the primitive Church, it can hardly be doubted that it was derived originally from the customs of the Jews, and modified by the habits and sympathies of the age and nation. In our day and country, however, it would be manifestly preposterous to ask that men should fall down at the feet of their brethren, weep and groan, embrace the knees of the clergy, wear sackcloth, live on bread and water, and put ashes on their heads, in order to prove the reality and strength of their sorrow for transgression. It is not by such discipline as this that we could be persuaded to show our sorrow for any thing. Even our women are expected to control the outward expression of their keenest anguish within the limits of formal propriety, and a display like that which the ancient fathers describe would be far more likely to excite disgust than to move compassion. Neither do we find that any such external exhibitions were commanded by our Lord or his apostles. So far from it, indeed, that the Saviour more than once rebukes the Pharisees for their ostentation, and tells His disciples, when they fasted, *not* to do it so as to be seen of men. What He requires is the change of the heart, the inward sorrow of the contrite spirit springing from a loving faith in Him, the

hatred of sin as being opposed to His holy commandments, the earnest determination, through an humble reliance on His strength, to forsake it utterly, manifested by the correspondent course of life and conversation which can alone prove our repentance to be sincere. And these things are all demanded under our present system. If the Church, in addition, were to attempt a return to the primitive practice, through a blind and unreflecting reverence for the habits of that early age, it would be simply ridiculous; and, instead of drawing the world to Christ, it would only expose His Gospel to derision.

But if it would be absurd to attempt a restoration of those rules and modes which, although they were not apostolic, were yet the nearest to the apostolic age, how much more absurd would it be to undertake the introduction of the Confessional, which, as I have shown from the most unquestionable authority, grew up by slow degrees in times of ignorance and barbarism, and was not consummated, in connection with sacramental absolution, until the thirteenth century! In vain should we endeavor to defend such a measure by the authority of our venerable Mother Church, because she only *permitted it* under peculiar circumstances, *when earnestly desired by the laity themselves*, and never *recommended, much less urged it*, as a general means of increasing the piety of her people. And therefore, modify it as we may, and sustain it as we might, it is impossible that it could ever be regarded by the Church at large in any other aspect than that of sympathy with Romanism. For myself, indeed, I cheerfully disclaim the opinion that such was the true motive for the Rev. Mr. Maskell's theory. I doubt not that he was sincere in his desire to improve the devotional spirit of our degenerate day,

and that he fully believed his system to be quite consistent with the avowed principles and best interests of his and our communion. But I find it very hard to understand how he and his admirers could expect that such a proposition should have been received without a lively feeling of alarm and consternation. And I think it by no means unlikely that, if they were encouraged to proceed in this first measure of reform, they would be strongly tempted to go on until they had brought the "tribunal of penance" up to the full mark of Roman expediency.

This first step, however, can never be taken with the consent of the Church; for it is not only inconsistent with all our habits and principles, but it is totally destitute of all scriptural or primitive authority. The earliest suggestion that looks like it is in a passage of Origen, about the middle of the third century, but that, when properly examined, speaks only of a voluntary private confession to a physician (not specifying the priest at all), solely with a view to friendly counsel and advice, and *without the slightest hint of private absolution.** Nor have I found any thing in the pages of the fathers urging the laity to come in secret to their pastors, and confess their sins, for the purpose of being absolved. The truth is, that the notion of any such practice existing in the primitive ages, is a mere figment of the Church of Rome, to support their modern system of sacerdotal domination.

I frankly own, therefore, that I can not imagine how such an innovation, even if it were possible to

* The passage is quoted from Ruffinus by Bingham, book viii., chap. iii., § 8, who says that it advised a voluntary confession sometimes to the *priest*. But the term in the original is *medicus*, which may have signified as well any experienced Christian.

establish it, could ever be expected to improve the piety either of our clergy or of our people. As it is, we have all the means of grace, and all the holy privileges appointed by our Lord, and administered by His inspired apostles. As it is, the members of our flocks are constantly led to confess their sins to Him who is the Searcher of hearts, and before whose awful tribunal they must stand in judgment. As it is, they have the grace of pardon connected with the faithful reception of the sacraments and the regular absolution of prayer, the only form employed by the Church until the thirteenth century. As it is, they are freely invited to come to their pastors and "open their grief," whenever they find that they "can not quiet their own consciences, and need further comfort or counsel." And it is impossible to add any real improvement to these privileges by borrowing the form of words introduced through the despotic influence of the fourth Lateran Council. We have been taught by all the standard writers of our venerated Mother Church to regard that form with little reverence. Her clergy have never considered it as an active element of ministerial duty. Her laity scarcely know of its existence; and her divines speak of it, not in the language of praise, but rather in the terms of reluctant apology. It was most wisely left out of our ecclesiastical system, and never can be grafted upon it hereafter. And its advocates, however estimable for their past zeal or their present sincerity, will be convinced, I trust, upon reflection, that their position is untenable; and resolve, in the exercise of true Christian magnanimity, to abandon a vain effort, which can not be continued with the slightest hope of advantage to the Church or credit to themselves.

I am far, however, from denying the justice of the complaint—which, indeed, we are all ready to utter —that the age is relaxed, that there is but little discipline, and that the amount of active piety in our communion is by no means what it should be. Alas! when was there not abundant ground for the same lamentation? Even in the apostles' days, did not St. Paul deplore the contentions and strifes of the Corinthians, the backsliding of the Galatians, the enmity of false brethren? Did he not record the mournful reproach, "All men seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ?" Did not St. John declare that anti-Christ was already come? And was there not an awful warning delivered by the Spirit to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor? And in the ages which we are accustomed to venerate as primitive, may not Cyprian, Eusebius, Athanasius, Jerome, Augustin, Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory, Salvian, and others, be quoted, in countless passages of eloquent sorrow, on the same melancholy theme? And is it now, in the "last days, when perilous times should come, when men should be lovers of their own selves, proud, disobedient, unthankful, unholy"—is it now, after the Saviour Himself has compared the time before His second advent to the state of the world before the flood, and uttered the dreadful question which looks so like a prophecy, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith upon the earth?"—is it now that we should wonder at the low state of Christian piety, and think that the defect which is *personal in ourselves and in our flocks* can be remedied by *innovating upon the apostolic system?*

No mistake could be more fatal than to imagine that the apathy and worldliness of the age may be removed by urging men to confess their sins to us,

and giving them our private absolution. The remedy would prove worse than the disease. Neither have we any right to arrogate the prerogative of improving the original plan of discipline. We are but the servants of Christ, commissioned to proclaim His word, to administer His sacraments, to maintain His system, to declare that "He absolveth all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel," and fervently to "beseech Him to grant us true repentance and His Holy Spirit." If we do this earnestly, and faithfully, and constantly, and humbly, we are not responsible for the results. The TREASURE is His; we are but the earthen vessels. The POWER is His; we are but the poor, weak instruments. The TIMES AND THE SEASONS are His; and though we may often seem to be surrounded by darkness, yet we must patiently abide at our allotted post, and watch and pray for the promised day of His glorious manifestation. At the worst, we may take comfort in the reflection of the poet,*

"They also serve who only stand and wait."

In conclusion, then, let me say, that no discouragement, no dejection, no difficulty should induce us to tamper with the system of the Church. That is of Divine appointment, and must be kept sacred from the hand of innovation. True, the spirit of innovation is the spirit of the age; and we may be well content to let it have its full range in the arts, the sciences, the commerce, the governments, and whatever else belongs to the uses, the tastes, or the ambition of mortality. But we may not suffer it to touch the Ark of our Redemption. Innovation has been the plague of the Church of Rome. Innovation has been

* Milton.

the fruitful parent of heresy and schism. Let us be devoutly thankful to that Almighty Saviour whose gracious Providence has restored to us, whole and undefiled, our apostolic heritage. And let us hold it as a solemn truth, whatever may be our personal deficiencies, that there is not at this day, in the wide world, a Church which so fully deserves the fervent affection of her priests, and the zealous confidence of her people.

APPENDIX.

Note 1.

Si cui cum alio inimicitiæ intercedunt, alter alterum accedit, et is qui alium injuriâ aliquâ affecit, veniam injuriæ illatæ ab offensa parte debet petere. Injuriâ affectus sponte condonare debet: sic enim Deus peccata sua illo quoque citò condonat. Si prima vice ignoscere noluerit, qui veniam petit tres alios secum assumat, eumque bis et ter deprecetur; si nihil promoveat, non ex debito, sed ex abundanti decem secum assumat, eumque iterum deprecetur. Si injuriâ affectus tum condonet, benè se res habet: si secus, tamen suo functus officio, liber est et immunis, nihilque veniæ, quam a Deo sperat, hoc nocebit: alter autem, qui remittere noluit, vocatur *crudelis*, neque a Deo suorum peccatorum remissionem petet. Dicitur enim, die expiationum remitti peccata, quibus homo Deum immediatè offendit, juxta id quod dicitur: Levit., xvi., 30: *In hac die expiabit vos ut emundet vos: ab omnibus peccatis vestris coram Deo mundabimini*, h. e. *Quod peccastis coram Deo, in hoc die expiatur, et ab eo mundabimini:* Quæ verò intercedunt offensæ inter hominem et proximum ejus, nequaquam donec eum placarit et cum eo reconciliatus sit, etiamsi non nisi verbis eum irritarit, &c.—*Buxtorf. Synagoga Judaica*, c. xxv., p. 517–8.

Hoc die quoque peccata sua Deo confitentur, quam *viddui* vocant. Quia enim *Dies Expiationum* est, dies remissionis et expiationis peccatorum, ideo aiunt necesse esse, ut eo quisque peccatorum suorum confessionem edat, sicut in V. T. de omnibus oblationibus, quæ pro peccatorum expiatione fiebant, legitur, *Et confitebuntur peccata sua quæ fecerunt*, &c. Sicut etiam Sacerdos summus in die expiationum, pro se, et pro toto Israële confessus, sicut dicitur; *Expiationem faciet pro se, et pro domo sua, et pro universo cœtu Israël;* cujus sensus est, quòd confessus fuerit primò peccatum suum, deinde peccatum Israëlis. —*Ib.*, p. 519.

Confessionis formula satis longa est, et habetur in libris precum ipsorum. Concepta est ordine alphabetico, ita ut unaquæque litera complectatur peccatum aliquod tum gravius, tum frequentius; ad quæ deinde, qui magis sunt devoti et contriti, et judicio pollent, alia specialia addunt, quorum sibi sunt conscii, vel ad quæ aliàs naturâ inclinantur et feruntur; eorum remissionem simul a Deo petentes.—*Ib.*, p. 520.

Hanc si quis publicè et clarâ voce legat aut recitet, non necesse habet specialem peccatorum suorum enumerationem ei inserere, sed si privatim et submissâ voce confiteatur, benè facit, qui omnia, quorum meminisse potest, recuset: quia magis hac ratione ad pœnitentiam agen-

dam exstimulatur. Sic aiunt fecisse Mosen, quando pro Israëlitis orans dixit: *Obsecro peccavit populus iste peccatum grande: fecerunt enim sibi Deos aureos.*

Confessio debet fieri stando (majoris humilitatis testandæ gratiâ), et corde sincero ac perfecto. Sæpius, et minimùm decies hoc die eam iterant.—*Ib.*, p. 521.

Note 2.

Hoc enim dico, pœnitentiam quæ per Dei gratiam ostensa et indicta nobis, in gratiam nos Domino revocat, semel cognitam atque susceptam, nunquam posthac iteratione delicti resignare oportere.—*Tert.*, *de Pœnitentia*, § v., p. 123, B.

Note 3.

Lavacrum illud obsignatio est fidei, quæ fides a pœnitentiæ fide incipitur et commendatur. Non ideo abluimur, ut delinquere desinamus, sed quia desiimus; quoniam jam corde loti sumus.—*Ib.*, § vi., p. 125, B.

Collocavit in vestibulo pœnitentiam secundam, quæ pulsantibus patefaciat, sed jam semel, quia jam secundo, sed amplius nunquam, quia proximus frustra.—*Ib.*, § vii., p. 126, B, C.

Note 4.

Collocavit in vestibulo. Consuetudo et ritus erat ut pœnitentes in vestibulo ecclesiæ manerent, ad quem respicit.—Albasp.

Sed amplius nunquam. Ergo una tantum erat post baptismum pœnitentia.—Albasp.

Note 5.

Hujus igitur pœnitentiæ secundæ et unius, quanto in acto negotium est, tanto operosior probatio est, ut non sola conscientia præferatur, sed aliquo etiam actu administretur. Is actus . . . . exomologesis est, qua delictum Domino nostrum confitemur, non quidem ut ignaro, sed quatenus satisfactio confessione disponitur, confessione pœnitentia nascitur, pœnitentia Deus mitigatur.—*Tert.*, *de Pœnitent.*, § ix., p. 126–7.

Note 6.

Itaque exomologesis prosternendi et humilificandi hominis disciplina est, conversationem injungens misericordiæ illicem, de ipso quoque habitu atque victu mandat, sacco et cineri incubare; corpus sordibus obscurare, animum mœroribus dejicere, illa quæ peccavit tristi tractatione mutare: ceterum, pastum et potum pura nosse, non ventris scilicet, sed animæ causa; plerumque vero jejuniis preces alere, ingemiscere, lacrymari, mugire dies noctesque ad Dominum Deum suum, presbyteris advolvi, et caris Dei adgeniculari, omnibus fratribus legationes deprecationis suæ injungere . . . . In quantum non peperceris tibi, in tantum tibi Deus, crede, parcet. Plerosque tamen hoc opus, ut publicationem sui aut suffugere, aut de die in diem differre, præsumo, pudoris magis memores quam salutis: velut illi, qui in partibus verecundi-

oribus corporis contracta vexatione, conscientiam medentium vitant, et ita cum erubescentia sua pereunt.—*Ib.*, § ix., p. 127, A, B.

Note 7.

Ninum, Clementianum, Florum . . . . vi tormentorum subactos esse, et de gradu gloriæ, ad quam plena fidei virtute tendebant diutinis cruciatibus excidisse : nec tamen post hunc gravem lapsum, non voluntate sed necessitate susceptum, a pœnitentiæ agenda per hoc triennium destitisse. De quibus consulendum putastis an eos ad communicationem jam fas esset admittere.—*S. Cyp., ep. ad Fortunatum et al., de iis qui per tormenta superantur*, p. 84.

Note 8.

Nam cùm in minoribus peccatis agant peccatores pœnitentiam justo tempore, et secundum disciplinæ ordinem ad exomologesin veniant, et per manus impositionem Episcopi et cleri jus communicationis accipiant : nunc crudo tempore, persecutione adhuc perseverante, nondum restituta Ecclesiæ ipsius pace, ad communicationem admittuntur, et offertur nomen eorum : et nondum pœnitentia acta, nondum exomologesi facta, nondum manu eis ab Episcopo et Clero imposita, eucharistia illis datur, cùm scriptum sit : Qui ederit panem aut biberit calicem Domini indignè, reus erit corporis et sanguinis Domini.—*S. Cyp., ep. ad Clerum, de Presbyteris qui temerè pacem lapsis dederunt*, p. 21.

Note 9.

Magna est misericordiæ merces, cui Deus pollicetur, peccata se omnia remissurum. Si audieris, inquit, preces supplicis tui, et ego audiam tuas : si misertus laborantium fueris, et ego in tuo labore miserebor. Si autem non respexeris, nec adjuveris, et ego animum tuum contra te geram, tuisque te legibus judicabo.—*Lactant., de vero cultu*, l. vi., § 12, p. 404.

Note 10.

Deus enim purgari homines a peccatis maximè cupit, ideoque agere pœnitentiam jubet. Agere autem pœnitentiam nihil aliud est, quam profiteri et affirmare, se ulterius non peccaturum.—*Ib.*, § 13.

Quod si mortalis conditio non patitur, esse hominem ab omni macula purum, debent ergo largitione perpetua peccata carnis aboleri.—*Ib.*, p. 405.

Note 11.

Nam si liberos nostros, cum delictorum suorum cernimus pœnitere, correctos esse arbitramur, et abdicatos, abjectosque rursus tamen suscipimus, fovemus, amplectimur ; cur desperemus clementiam Dei Patris pœnitendo posse placari ? Ergo idem Dominus, ac parens indulgentissimus, remissurum se pœnitentibus peccata promittit, et obliteraturum omnes iniquitates ejus, qui justitiam denuò cœperit operari.—*Ib.*, § 24, p. 437.

Note 12.

Capitulum I.

Placuit inter eos, qui post fidem baptismi salutaris, adulta ætate, ad templum idolatraturus accesserit, et fecerit, quod est crimen principale, quia est summum scelus, placuit, nec in fine eum communionem accipere.—*Con. General. Hard.*, tom. i., p. 250. *Concilium Eliberitanum.*

Note 13.

VII.

Si quis forte fidelis post lapsum mœchiæ, post tempora constituta, accepta pœnitentia denuo fuerit fornicatus, placuit, nec in fine habere eum communionem.—*Ib.*

Note 14.

VIII.

Item feminæ, quæ nulla præcidente causa, reliquerint viros suos, et se copulaverint alteris, nec in fine accipiant communionem.—*Ib.*

Note 15.

XXXII.

Si quis de catholica ecclesia ad hæresim transitum fecerit, rursusque recurrerit; placuit, huic pœnitentiam non esse denegandam, eo quod cognoverit peccatum suum. Qui etiam decem annis agat pœnitentiam. Cui post decem annos præstari communio debet. Si vero infantes fuerint transducti, quod non suo vitio peccaverint, incunctanter recipi debent.—*Ib.*

Note 16.

LXXIV.

Falsus testis, prout est crimen, abstinebitur. Si tamen non fuerit mortale quod objecit, et probaverit, ... biennii tempore abstineatur: si autem non probaverit conventui clericorum, placuit, per quinquennium abstineri.—*Ib.*

Note 17.

LXXIX.

Si quis fidelis alea, id est tabula luserit nummos, placuit eum abstineri: et si emendatus cessaverit, post annum poterit communioni reconciliari.—*Ib.*

Note 18.

Canon XII.

Si qui vero per Dei gratiam vocati, primo quidem ostenderent fidem suam, deposito militiæ cingulo; post hæc autem ad proprium vomitum sunt reversi, ut et pecunias darent, et ambirent redire rursum ad militiam, isti decem annis sint inter pœnitentes, post primum triennium quo fuerint inter audientes. Ab omnibus vero illud præcipuè observetur, ut animus eorum et fructus pœnitentiæ attendatur. Quicumque

enim cum omni timore et lacrymis perseverantibus, et operibus bonis, conversionem suam non verbis solis, sed opere et veritate demonstrant; cùm tempus statutum (auditionis) etiam ab his fuerit impletum, et orationibus jam cœperint communicare; licebit episcopo humanius etiam circa eos aliquid cogitare. Qui vero indifferenter habuerunt lapsum, et sufficere sibi quod ecclesiam introierunt arbitrantur, isti omnimodo tempora statuta complebunt. — *Concilium Nicænum, Concil. General. Hard.*, tom. i., p. 328.

Note 19.

Principium bonorum est pristinorum malorum depositio per veram pœnitentiam et confessionem, quæ ad bonum finem, scilicet ad Deum ipsum deducit. Etenim si nemo bonus nisi Deus, optimæ viæ ad Deum ducentis principium, confessio fuerit. Ideo dictum est, *Bonum est confiteri Domino.* Par quippe est non hominibus confessionem edere, sed ipsi Domino corda scrutanti.—*Eusebii Cæsariensis Com. in Psal.* 608, C.

Note 20.

Confitemini Domino, et invocate nomen ejus ; . . . . magnum quidpiam subindicans. At enim si confessus fueris, ait, et peccata deposueris, nomen ejus cum fiducia invocando magna edere opera valebis. Neque sine causa primo confiteri, postea invocare exoptat, sed ut per confessionem purgati, ex puro instrumento hymnum offeramus.—*Ib.*, 678, E.

Note 21.

Nam profectûs secundum Deum initium confessio est, finis autem lætitia secundum Deum; plurima vero sunt in medio horum posita. Oportet igitur homines primo confiteri Domino per sinceram pœnitentiam, ac per fructus confessioni congruentes: deinde vero ad meliora profectos confidere et invocare nomen ejus: sicque ubi post confessionem invocaverint eum, divinis charismatibus donari, &c.—*Ib.*, 679, E.

See, also, the same work, p. 120–1, 690.

Note 22.

Quæstio LXXVI. Quæ lex dat veniam omnium peccatorum?

Responsio. Domini dicentis: *Ne judicetis et non judicabimini.* Et rursus: *Dimitte nobis, ut nos etiam dimittimus debitoribus nostris.* Liquet hinc, quod non judicare proximum veniam det omnibus peccatis. Similiter et non recordari offensarum. *Remittite enim*, inquit, *et remittetur vobis.*

Note 23.

Quæstio LXXVII. Si quis gravissimum commisisset peccatum, et resipuisset, unde debet discere, an remissum sit ei a Deo, necne?

Responsio. Hoc quidem paucis hominibus in terra planum fit: tamen quemadmodum Dominus et servus, sic et conscientia hominis et Deus se habent. Quemadmodum igitur servus lapsus cognoscet ex gestibus et verbis domini sui, quod non sit apud eum in gratia ut ante lapsum: sic etiam homo peccans perdit loquendi libertatem, quam habebat con-

scientia ipsius ad Deum in precibus suis. Resipiscenti autem homini dignè, gratificatur rursus isti Deus loquendi libertatem, quam habuerat ad Deum ante lapsum. Et hinc cognoscit homo, quod Deus ipsi peccatum condonaverit.—*Athan., om. op.*, t. ii., p. 361.

See, also, the same work, t. ii., p. 366–7, *Quæst.* XCI.

Note 24.

Tempus præsens est tempus confessionis. Confitere quæ perpetrasti, sive verbo, sive opere, sive nocte sive die .... Si quid contra quemquam habes, remitte. Accedis ut veniam peccatorum accipias; necesse est et te ei qui peccavit condonare; alioqui, qua fronte dices Domino: Remitte mihi multa mea peccata, cum tu neque pauca conservo tuo remiseris?—*S. Cyril, Hierosol. Cat. Prima*, § v., vi., p. 18, 19.

Note 25.

Benignus est Deus, et non modicè benignus. Tu namque ne dixeris: Scortator et adulter fui, gravia scelera patravi, idque non semel sed frequentissimè. Numquid condonabit? Numquid dabit ut obliviscatur? Audi quid Psalmicen dicat: *Quam magna multitudo benignitatis tuæ, Domine!* Non vincunt tua cumulata peccata multitudinem miserationum Dei. Non superant vulnera tua summi illius medici experientiam. Trade tantummodo te ipsum illi cum fide. Edissere medico morbum tuum, dic et ipse cum Davide: *Dixi, pronuntiabo adversum me iniquitatem meam Domino*, et fiet tibi similiter id quod sequitur: *Et tu remisisti impietatem cordis mei.*—*Ib., Cat. Secund.*, § vi., p. 24–5.

Note 26.

Maxima autem et utilissima est lætalium vitiorum morbis in eorum confessione medicina. Sed confessio peccati non est tanquam rerum aliis ignoratarum professio: ut si fur de furto, aut homicida de cæde interrogatus confitetur. Neque tamquam ignorans qui scrutans corda et renes Deus est, ad scientiam sui confessione tua indiget: cui promptum est non solum cogitata, sed cogitanda perspicere. Confessio autem peccati ea est, ut id quod a te gestum est per cognitionem peccati confitearis esse peccatum.... Nullus autem id quod peccatum esse confessus est, deinceps debet admittere: quia confessio peccati professio est desinendi.... Detersis itaque omnibus vitiis confessione opus est desinendi: et orandum semper ad Deum est, ut in cohibendis peccatis extinguendisque incentivis eorum, pendula voluntatis nostræ studia confirmet. Ob quod jam confidens Propheta, per confessionem ac precem suam in portu se innocentiæ collocat cum ait: *Confitebor tibi Domine in toto corde meo, quoniam audisti verba oris mei.*—*S. Hilarii in Psal.* cxxxvii. *Enar. op. om.*, p. 1095–6.

Note 27.

Ad Deum itaque spes omnis nostra sit, et confessio omnis in Deo sit, exemplo Prophetæ dicentis: *Domine adjutor meus, et Redemptor meus.* —*Ib.*, p. 700, C.

Note 28.

Nihil occultum, nihil clausum, nihil obligatum sub Dei confessione in corde retinendum est. Effundendus coram eo omnis affectus est, ut nihil de nobis metipsis fiduciæ sit; sed ut per eum, ante quem nos tanquam pro peccato effundimus, adjuvemur.—*S. Hilar. in Psal.* lxii. *Enar.*, p. 763–4.

Note 29.

Ubi peccati confessio est, ibi et justificatio a Deo est, quod in publicano et pharisæo Dominus testatus est, cum pharisæus justum se gloriatus est, publicanus verò pro peccatis orasset.—*Ib.*, p. 1013. See, also, p. 1082, 799, 950, 664.

Note 30.

Movet scribas remissum ab homine peccatum. Hominem enim tantùm in Jesu Christo contuebantur: et remissum ab eo, quod lex laxare non poterat. Fides enim sola justificat. Deinde murmurationem eorum Dominus introspicit, dicitque facile esse filio hominis in terra peccata dimittere. Verùm enim nemo potest dimittere peccata, nisi solus Deus: ergo qui remittit Deus est, quia nemo remittit nisi Deus. Deus in homine manens curationem homini præstabat: et nulla ei agendi ant loquendi erat difficultas, cui subest totum posse quod loquitur. Porrò autem ut ipse in corpore positus, intelligi posset esse, qui et animis peccata dimitteret, et resurrectionem corporibus præstaret, ait, *Ut sciatis quoniam filius hominis habet potestatem in terra dimittere peccata, ait paralytico: Surge, tolle lectum tuum .... Et honorificaverunt Deum, qui tantam dedit potestatem hominibus.* Conclusa sunt omnia ordine, et cessante jam desperationis timore, honor Deo redditur, quòd tantam dederit hominibus potestatem: sed soli hoc Christo erat debitum, soli de communione paternæ substantiæ hæc agere erat familiare. Non ergo hoc venit in admirationem quod posset ista (quid enim non posse Deus crederetur?) alioquin laus de uno homine, non de pluribus extitisset: sed delati Deo honoris hinc causa est, quòd potestas hominibus hac via data sit per Verbum ejus, et peccatorum remissionis, et corporum resurrectionis, et reversionis in cœlum.—*S. Hilar.*, *Com. in Matthæum*, c. viii., p. 529, 530.

Note 31.

Vult tui misereri judex, teque miserationum suarum facere participem: si modo post peccatum reperiret te humilem, contritum, prava opera multum deplorantem, ac ea quæ clam facta sunt evulgantem citra pudorem, rogantem fratres tibi ut sint adjumento ad accipiendam medelam.—*S. Basil. Mag. Hom. in Psal.* xxxii. *opp.*, t. i., p. 134, E.

Note 32.

Unum porro vitandum est tibi, peccatum videlicet, et unicum ex malis refugium tibi sit Deus. Ne confidite principibus, ne efferamini animo in incerto divitiarum, ne superbiatis ob corporis vires, ne humanæ

gloriæ prosequamini splendorem. Nihil horum ducit ad salutem, temporaria omnia, omnia fallacia: refugium unicum Deus. *Maledictus homo qui spem ponit in homine*, aut in aliqua re humana.—*S. Basil. Mag. Hom. in Psal.* xlv. *opp.*, t. i., p. 171, B.

Note 33.

Interrogatio. An oporteat vetitas actiones citra verecundiam omnibus detegere, aut aliquibus dumtaxat, et quinam hi sunt?

Responsio. Servanda est ratio eadem in peccatorum confessione, quæ in detegendis corporis morbis adhibetur. Quemadmodum igitur corporis morbos non omnibus patefaciunt homines, neque quibusvis, sed iis qui horum curandorum periti sunt; ita fieri quoque debet peccatorum confessio, coram iis, qui curare hæc possint, prout scriptum est: *Vos qui fortes estis, infirmitates debilium portate:* hoc est, cura et diligentia tollite.—*S. Basil. Mag. opp.*, t. ii., p. 492.

Note 34.

Interrogatio. Qui confiteri vult peccata sua, debetne confiteri omnibus, et quibuslibet, aut quibus?

Responsio. .... Peccata iis confiteri necesse est, quibus mysteriorum Dei concredita dispensatio est. Sic enim et qui olim pœnitentiam egerunt, coram sanctis fecisse comperiuntur. Scriptum est enim, in Evangelio quidem, quod peccata sua Joanni Baptistæ confitebantur; in Actis vero, Apostolis ipsis, a quibus etiam baptizabantur cuncti.—*Ib.*, p. 516. See, also, p. 393.

Note 35.

Oportet autem eos non omnino arcere ab Ecclesia, sed auditione dignari duobus vel tribus annis: ac posthac ipsis permittere, ut consistant quidem, abstineant vero a boni communione, et sic, exhibito pœnitentiæ aliquo fructu, communionis loco restituere.—*S. Basil. Canon.* 1, *opp.*, t. iii., p. 272.

Note 36.

Ne peccatum tuum confiteri grave ducas, sciens quo pacto Johannes baptizaverit; ut per hujus vitæ pudorem futuri seculi pudorem ignominiamque fugias, ... ac perspicuum facias te seriò atque ex animo peccatum odisse ac detestari, dum illud tanquam contumelia dignum traducis ac velut ludibrio exponis, de eoque triumphum agis.—*Greg. Naz. opp.*, p. 657, A.

Note 37.

Meritò reprehendentur qui sæpius agendam pœnitentiam putant, qui luxuriantur in Christo. Nam si verè agerent pœnitentiam, iterandam postea non putarent; quia sicut unum baptisma, ita una pœnitentia, quæ tamen publicè agitur, nam quotidiani nos debet pœnitere peccati: sed hæc delictorum leviorum, illa graviorum. — *S. Ambros. de Pœnitent.*, lib. ii., cap. x., § 95, *opp.*, t. ii., p. 436.

Note 38.

Ego dixi: Domine, miserere mei: sana animam meam, quia peccavi tibi. Potest et ex persona regis David hoc dici, qui videns in Spiritu tantam victoriam et gratiam Christi, petit ut in illa remissione peccatorum omnium et sui misereatur .... Confitetur ergo peccatum suum, ut accipiat remissionem, et generalis indulgentiæ munus inveniat.—*S. Ambros. in Psal.* xl., § 14, *opp.*, t. i., p. 872.

Note 39.

Simile illi hoc dixit: *Annuntiabo adversùm me iniquitatem meam Domino* .... Sed non satis est ut confiteamur errorem: verùm etiam si corrigi volumus, a Domino postulemus, ut doceat nos justificationes suas, ne postea errare possimus. A Domino igitur doceri petit, quia unus est magister noster, ut ait Christus. Nec otiosè hoc petit, non enim ille beatus quem docet homo: sed quem tu erudieris, Domine.—*S. Ambros. in Psal.* cxviii. *Expositio.*, *opp.*, t. i., p. 1012, § 11.

Note 40.

Ergo cui Christus peccata donavit, rectè dicit: *Retribue servo tuo, ut vivam, et custodiam verba tua* .... Sicut in prophetico libro testificatur ipse dicens: *Ego sum, ego sum, qui deleo iniquitates tuas, et memor non ero* .... Quicumque ergo dicit iniquitates suas Deo, justificatur: et quicumque justificatur, retributionem non timet, sed exposcit: qui retributionem non timet, vivet.—*S. Ambros. in Psal.* cxviii. *Exp.*, *opp.*, t. i., p. 996, § 10. See, also, p. 1080, § 5; p. 838, § 51.

Note 41.

Humilitas autem commendat orationem. Siquidem et Pharisæus ille reprehensus est qui jejunia sua velut beneficia enumerabat, et tamquam objectabat Deo, et se criminum memorabat exsortem. Publicanus autem prædicatus est, *qui a longè stans nolebat oculos ad cœlum levare, sed percutiebat pectus suum dicens: Domine Deus propitius esto mihi peccatori.* Et ideo divina eum sententia prætulit dicens: *Quia descendit hic publicanus justificatus magis quam pharisæus.* Ille enim justificatur qui peccatum proprium confitetur, sicut locutus est ipse Dominus: *Dic iniquitates tuas, ut justificeris.*—*S. Ambros. opp.*, t. i., p. 199, § 34.

Note 42.

Qui pœnitentiam agit, paratus esse debet ad opprobria perferenda injuriasque subeundas; nec commoveri, si quis ei peccati sui crimen objiciat. Cùm enim ipse accusare se debeat, quemadmodum alium non sustinet argumentum?—*S. Ambros. in Psal.* xxxvii. *Enar.*, *opp.*, t. i., p. 820, § 13.

Note 43.

Pater, inquit, *peccavi in cœlum, et coram te.* Hæc est prima confessio apud auctorem naturæ, præsulem misericordiæ, arbitrum culpæ,

Sed etsi Deus novit omnia, vocem tamen tuæ confesssionis exspectat. *Ore enim confessio fit ad salutem* . . . . Frustra autem velis occultare, quem nihil fallat, et sine periculo prodas, quod scias esse jam cognitum. Confitere magis, ut interveniat pro te Christus, quem advocatum habemus apud Patrem : roget pro te Ecclesia, et illacrymet populus. Nec vereare ne non impetres. Advocatus spondet veniam, patronus promittit gratiam, reconciliationem tibi paternæ pietatis pollicetur adsertor. Crede, quia veritas est : adquiesce, quia virtus est.—*S. Ambros. Exp. Evang. sec. Luc.*, l. vii., *opp.*, t. i., p. 1465, § 225. See, also, p. 1461, § 207, 208; p. 1357, § 11; p. 819, § 10; p. 1377, § 92; p. 694, § 55; p. 1365, § 55.

Note 44.

Faciliùs autem inveni qui innocentiam servaverint, quàm qui congruè egerint pœnitentiam. An quisquam illam pœnitentiam putat, ubi adquirendæ ambitio dignitatis, ubi vini effusio, ubi ipsius copulæ conjugalis usus? Renuntiandum sæculo est : somno ipsi minus indulgendum, quàm natura postulat, interpellandus est gemitibus, interrumpendus est suspiris, sequestrandus orationibus; vivendum ita, ut vitali huic moriamur usui, se ipsum sibi homo abneget, et totus mutetur.—*S. Ambros. de Pœnitent.*, lib. ii., cap. x., § 96, *opp.*, t. ii., p. 436.

Note 45.

Si quis igitur occulta crimina habens, propter Christum tamen studiosè pœnitentiam egerit, quomodo ista (nempè, fructus pœnitentiæ) recipit, si ei communio non refunditur? Volo veniam reus speret, petat eam lacrymis, petat gemitibus, petat populi totius fletibus, ut ignoscatur, obsecret; et cùm secundo et tertio fuerit dilata ejus communio, credat se remissiùs se supplicâsse, fletus augeat, miserabilior postea revertatur, teneat pedes brachiis, osculetur osculis, lavet fletibus, nec dimittat, ut de ipso dicat Dominus Jesus : *Remissa sunt peccata ejus multa : quoniam dilexit multum.*—*Ib.*, l. i., c. xvi., § 90, *opp.*, t. ii., p. 414.

Note 46.

Cognovi quosdam in pœnitentia sulcasse vultum lacrymis, exarasse continuis fletibus genas, stravisse corpus suum calcandum omnibus, jejuno ore semper et pallido mortis speciem spiranti in corpore prætulisse.—*Ib.*, § 91. See *ib.*, p. 435, § 91, 92. Also, p. 314, § 35, 36.

Note 47.

Sed tu quæ jam ingressa es agonem pœnitentiæ, insiste, misera : fortiter inhære tamquam in naufragiis tabulæ, sperans per ipsam te de profundo criminum liberari. Inhære pœnitentiæ usque ad extremum vitæ, nec tibi præsumas ab humana die veniam dari; quia decipit te qui hoc tibi polliceri voluerit. Quæ enim propriè in Dominum peccasti, ab ipso solo te convenit in die judicii exspectare remedium.—*S. Ambros. de Lapsu Virg. Con.*, *opp.*, t. ii., p. 315, § 38.

Note 48.

Petas ultro carcerem pœnitentiæ, obstringas catenis viscera, animam tuam gemitibus jejuniisque crucies, sanctorum petas auxilium, jaceas sub pedibus electorum, ut non tibi cor impœnitens thesaurizet iram in die iræ et justi judicii Dei, qui reddet unicuique secundùm opera sua.—*Ib.*, p. 316, § 40.

Note 49.

Ecclesia in utroque servat obedientiam ut peccatum et alliget et relaxet: .... Recte igitur hoc Ecclesia vindicat, quæ veros sacerdotes habet; hæresis vindicare non potest, quæ sacerdotes Dei non habet.—*S. Ambros. de Pœnitent.*, lib. i., *opp.*, t. ii., p. 391, 397.

Note 50.

Specta etiam illud, quoniam qui Spiritum Sanctum accepit, et solvendi peccati potestatem et ligandi accepit. Sic enim scriptum est; *Accipite Spiritum Sanctum: quorum remiseritis peccata, remittuntur: et quorum detinueritis, detenta erunt.* Ergo qui solvere non potest peccatum, non habet Spiritum Sanctum. Munus Spiritus Sancti est officium Sacerdotis, jus autem Spiritus Sancti in solvendis, ligandisque criminibus est: quomodo igitur munus ejus vindicant, de cujus diffidunt jure et potestate?—*Ib.*, p. 392, § 8. See, also, p. 399, § 33.

Note 51.

Homines autem in remissionem peccatorum ministerium suum exhibent, non jus alicujus potestatis exercent. Neque enim in suo, sed in Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti nomine peccata dimittunt. Isti rogant, divinitas donat; humanum enim obsequium, sed munificentia supernæ est potestatis.—*S. Ambros. de Spirit. Sanc.*, *opp.*, t. ii., p. 693, 137.

Note 52.

Tibi dabo claves regni cœlorum; et quodcumque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum et in cœlo: et quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in cœlo .... Quod Petro dicitur, apostolis dicitur. Non potestatem usurpamus, sed servimus imperio, ne postea cùm venerit Dominus, et ligatos invenerit quos oportuit solvi, commoveatur adversus dispensatorem, qui ligatos servaverit servos, quos Dominus jusserat solvi.—*S. Ambros. in Psal.* xxxviii. *Enar.*, *opp.*, t. i., p. 858, § 37.

Note 53.

Cur ergo manus imponitis et benedictionis opus creditis, si quis fortè revaluerit ægrotus? Cur præsumitis aliquos a colluvione diaboli per vos mundari posse? Cur baptizatis, si per hominem peccata dimitti non licet? In baptismo utique remissio peccatorum omnium est; quid interest, utrum per pœnitentiam, an per lavacrum, hoc jus sibi datum sacerdotes vindicent? Unum in utroque mysterium est.—*S. Ambros. de Pœnitent.*, lib. i., c. viii., p. 400, § 36.

Note 54.

Vera ergo medicina est gerere pœnitentiam: quæ tunc legitime prædicata est, quando medicus venit e cœlo, qui non exasperaret vulnera, sed sanaret.—*S. Ambros. opp.*, t. i., p. 816, § 4.

Note 55.

Et ideo qui sumus in hoc corpore mortis, oremus ne bonus ille dilectus Dei medicus nos derelinquat, quem patriarcha David ne a se discederet, precabatur .... Vide eum qui curari velit, omni genere medico adquiescentem: adtende ordinem. Aperit primo vulnera sua medico, et dicit: Cura me, sed rogo ne in ira tua, quia non sustinent duram medicinam infirmitates meæ. Medicina Christi, correptio est, corripit enim Dominus quem vult convertere.—*S. Ambros. in Psal.* xxxvii. *Enar., opp.*, t. i., p. 840, § 56.

Note 56.

Aufer, igitur, domine Jesu, potenti machæra tua putredines peccatorum: dum me habes ligatum caritatis vinculis, seca quodcumque vitiosum est .... Inveni medicum qui in cœlo habitat, et in terris spargit medicamentum. Hic solus potest sanare vulnera mea, qui sua nescit: hic auferre cordis dolorem, palloremque animæ, qui novit occulta. —*S. Ambros. Exp. Evang. sec. Luc.*, l. v., § 27, *opp.*, p. 1362.

Note 57.

Non confunditur, etiamsi erubescenda commiserit, qui veniam delictorum poscit a Christo. Ideoque respondetur ei: *Dimissa sunt peccata tua .... Vade in pace.* Sed ita non confunditur, si fuerit in eo operata peccatorum remissio, ut non solùm peccata, sed etiam peccandi affectum auferat. Justitia remittat iniquitates, fortitudo timorem, temperantia impuritates, ut non solùm temporalis sed etiam perpetua fiat remissio peccatorum. Intret in animam tuam Christus, inhabitet in tuis mentibus Jesus; ut in tabernaculo virtutis peccato locus esse non possit.—*S. Ambros. in Psal.* cxviii. *Expos., opp.*, t. i., p. 1016, § 26.

Note 58.

Enimvero perfecta in Baptismo quidem pœnitentia est. Sed si quis exciderit, non illum sancta Dei Ecclesia perditum voluit; imo et receptum, et post pœnitentiam mutandi consilii facultatem indulget.—*S. Epiph. adv. Hæres., opp.*, t. i., p. 493, D.

Note 59.

Quod ad eos vero spectat, qui in persecutione prolapsi sunt, etiam illis, si in sacco ac cinere sedentes, coramque Domino flentes, perfectam præ se pœnitentiam tulerint, beneficus ille Deus misericordiam adhibere potest.—*Ib.*, p. 500, A.

Note 60.

Quamvis grave sit peccatum, si quis convertatur, eum posse sanari. —*S. Hieron.*, t. v., p. 28, G.

Note 61.

Funibus enim peccatorum suorum unusquisque constringitur, quos funes atque vincula solvere possunt et Apostoli imitantes Magistrum suum qui eis dixerat, *Quæcumque solveritis super terram, erunt soluta et in cælo.* Solvunt autem eos Apostoli sermone Dei, et testimoniis Scripturarum, et exhortatione virtutum.—*S. Hieron. Com. in Es.*, c. xiv., t. v., p. 68–9.

Note 62.

Ad sacerdotis pertinet disciplinam, interrogatum respondere de lege. Qui si ignorantiam in cæteris diligentem, in Scripturis sanctis obtenderit negligentem, frustra jactat dignitatem, cujus opera non exhibet. Hoc est quod Apostolus Paulus scribit ad Titum, *Ut potens sit exhortari in doctrina sana, et contradicentes revincere.* Et ad Timotheum, *Quoniam ab infantia sacras literas nosti, quæ te possint instruere ad salutem, ut peccantes coram omnibus arguas.*—*S. Hieron. Com. in Malach.*, c. ii., *opp.*, t. vi., p. 236, D.

Note 63.

Si quem serpens Diabolus occultè momorderit, et nullo conscio eum peccati veneno infecerit, si tacuerit qui percussus est, et non egerit pœnitentiam, nec vulnus suum fratri et Magistro voluerit confiteri, Magister qui linguam habet ad curandum, facile ei prodesse non poterit. Si enim erubescat ægrotus vulnus medico confiteri quod ignorat, medicina non curat.—*S. Hieron. Com. in Ecclesiasten*, c. x., *opp.*, t. vii., p. 75, F.

Note 64.

Beati quorum remissæ sunt iniquitates, quorum peccata per confessionem a Domino diluuntur. Quibus modis remittuntur peccata? Tribus. Remittuntur per Baptismum, teguntur per charitatem, non imputantur per martyrium.—*S. Hieron. Com. in Psal.* xxxi., *opp.*, t. viii., p. 36, H.

Note 65.

Erasmus, secretam hic peccatorum confessionem apud veteres fuisse negat, publicam tantùm, quæ ob publica facinora peragerétur, admittit.—*Scholium Marini Victor. Reatini in Epis. S. Hieron.*, *opp.*, t. x., p. 43, F.

Note 66.

Tres sunt autem actiones pœnitentiæ, quas mecum Vestra Eruditio recognoscit. Sunt enim usitatæ in Ecclesia Dei, et diligenter adtendentibus notæ. Una est quæ novum hominem parturit, donec per bap-

tismum salutare omnium præteritorum fiat ablutio peccatorum: ut tanquam puero nato dolores transeant, quibus viscera urgebantur ad partum, et tristitiam lætitia consequatur. Omnis enim, qui jam arbiter voluntatis suæ constitutus est, cùm accèdit ad sacramenta fidelium, nisi eum pœniteat vitæ veteris, novam non potest inchoare. Ab hac pœnitentia, cùm baptizantur, soli parvuli sunt immunes: nondum enim uti possunt libero arbitrio.—*S. Augustin.*, t. v., p. 942, § 2.

Note 67.

Altera verò pœnitentia est, cujus actio per totam istam vitam qua in carne mortali degimus, perpetua supplicationis humilitate subeunda est.—*Ib.*, p. 943, § 3.... Unde etiam orantes dicimus, quod in tota ista vita oportet ut dicamus: *Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.* Non enim ea dimitti precamur, quæ jam in baptismo nisi dimissa credimus, de ipsa fide dubitamus: sed utique de quotidianis peccatis hoc dicimus, pro quibus etiam sacrificia eleemosynarum, jejuniorum, et ipsarum orationum ac supplicationum quisque pro suis viribus offerre non cessat.—*Ib.*, t. v., p. 945, § 6.

Note 68.

Tertia actio est pœnitentiæ, quæ pro illis peccatis subeunda est, quæ Legis decalogus continet; et de quibus Apostolus ait, *Quoniam qui talia agunt, regnum Dei non possidebunt.* In hac ergo pœnitentia, majorem quisque in se severitatem debet exercere; ut a se ipso judicatus, non judicetur a Domino.—*Ib.*, p. 945–6, § 7.

Note 69.

Implicatus igitur tam mortiferorum vinculis peccatorum detrectat, aut differt, aut dubitat confugere ad ipsas claves Ecclesiæ, quibus solvatur in terra, ut sit solutus in cœlo?.... Judicet ergo se ipsum homo in istis voluntate, dum potest, et mores convertat in melius, ne cùm jam non poterit, etiam præter voluntatem a Domino judicetur. Et cùm ipse in se protulerit severissimæ medicinæ, sed tamen medicinæ sententiam, veniat ad antistites, per quos illi in Ecclesia claves ministrantur: et tamquam bonus jam incipiens esse filius, maternorum membrorum ordine custodito, a præpositis sacramentorum accipiat satisfactionis suæ modum; ut in offerendo sacrificio cordis contribulati devotus et supplex, id tamen agat quod non solùm ipsi prosit ad recipiendam salutem, sed etiam ceteris ad exemplum. Ut si peccatum ejus, non solùm in gravi ejus malo, sed etiam in tanto scandalo aliorum est, atque hoc expedire utilitati Ecclesiæ videtur antistiti, in notitia multorum, vel etiam totius plebis agere pœnitentiam non recuset, non resistat, non lethali et mortiferæ plagæ per pudorem addat tumorem.—*Ib.*, t. v., p. 947, § 9.

Note 70.

Nemo arbitretur, Fratres, propterea se consilium salutiferæ hujus pœnitentiæ debere contemnere, quia multos fortè advertit et novit ad sacramenta altaris accedere, quorum talia crimina non ignorat. Multi

enim corriguntur, ut Petrus; multi tolerantur, ut Judas; multi nesciuntur, donec veniat Dominus, qui illuminet abscondita tenebrarum, et manifestet cogitationes cordis. Nam plerique propterea nolunt alios accusare, dum se per illos cupiunt excusari. Plerique autem boni Christiani propterea tacent, et sufferunt aliorum peccata quæ noverunt, quia documentis sæpe deseruntur, et ea quæ ipsi sciunt, judicibus Ecclesiasticis probare non possunt. Quamvis enim vera sint quædam, non tamen judici facilè credenda sunt, nisi certis indiciis demonstrentur. Nos verò a communione prohibere quemquam non possumus (quamvis hæc prohibitio nondum sit mortalis, sed medicinalis), nisi aut sponte confessum, aut in aliquo sive sæculari, sive Ecclesiastico judicio nominatum atque convictum. Quis enim sibi utrumque audeat assumere, ut cuiquam ipse sit et accusator et judex?—*Ib.*, t. v., p. 948, § 10.

Note 71.

Non enim sine causa inter omnes apostolos hujus Ecclesiæ Catholicæ personam sustinet Petrus, huic enim Ecclesiæ claves regni cœlorum datæ sunt, cùm Petro datæ sunt. Et cùm ei dicitur, ad omnes dicitur, *Amas me? Pasce oves meas.* Debet ergo Ecclesia catholica correctis et pietate firmatis filiis libenter ignoscere.—*Ib.*, t. vi., p. 190, § 32, B.

Note 72.

Est enim Ecclesia corpus ejus, sicut apostolica doctrina commendat, quæ etiam conjunx ejus dicitur.—*Ib.*, t. iii., *Pars* 1, p. 8, § 15.

Note 73.

Has igitur claves dedit Ecclesiæ suæ, ut quæ solveret in terra soluta essent in cælo, quæ ligaret in terra ligata essent in cælo: scilicet ut quisquis in Ecclesia ejus dimitti sibi peccata non crederet, non ei dimitterentur.—*Ib.*, § 17.

Note 74.

Et cùm dixisset, *Accipite Spiritum Sanctum*, continuò subjecit, *Si cui dimiseritis peccata, dimittuntur ei:* hoc est, Spiritus dimittit, non vos. Spiritus autem Deus est. Deus ergo dimittit, non vos. Sed ad Spiritum quid estis vos? *Nescitis quia templum Dei estis, et Spiritus Dei habitat in vobis?* Et iterum, *Nescitis quia corpora vestra templum in vobis est Spiritus Sancti, quem habetis a Deo?* Deus ergo habitat in templo sancto, hoc est, in sanctis fidelibus, in Ecclesia sua: per eos dimittit peccata; quia viva templa sunt.—*Ib.*, t. v., p. 366, D, E.

Note 75.

Sed scio me postea sæpissimè sic exposuisse quod a Domino dictum est, *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam meam:* ut, *super hanc*, intelligeretur quem confessus est Petrus dicens, *Tu es Christus filius Dei vivi:* ac sic Petrus ab hac petra appellatus personam Ecclesiæ figuraret, quæ super hanc petram ædificatur, et accepit

claves regni cœlorum. Non enim dictum est illi, Tu es Petra, sed, *Tu es Petrus*. Petra autem erat Christus, quem confessus Simon, sicut eum tota Ecclesia confitetur, dictus est Petrus.—*S. Augustin. Retractationum*, lib. i., c. xxi., § 1, *opp.*, t. i., p. 23.

Note 76.

Et vidi, inquit, *sedes et sedentes super eos, et judicium datum est.* Non hoc putandum est de ultimo judicio dici, sed sedes præpositorum, et ipsi præpositi intelligendi sunt, per quos Ecclesia nunc gubernatur. Judicium autem datum nullum melius accipiendum videtur, quam id quod dictum est, *Quæ ligaveritis in terra, ligata erunt et in cœlo*, &c. —*S. Augustin. de Civitat. Dei*, p. 443, lib. xx., c. ix., § 2.

Note 77.

Sed erunt sacerdotes Dei et Christi et regnabunt cum eo mille annos ; non utique de solis episcopis et presbyteris dictum est, qui propriè jam vocantur in Ecclesia sacerdotes : sed sicut omnes Christianos dicimus propter mysticum chrisma, sic omnes sacerdotes, quoniam membra sunt unius Sacerdotis. De quibus apostolus Petrus, *Plebs*, inquit, *sancta, regale sacerdotium.—Ib.*, lib. xx., c. x., p. 445.

Note 78.

Non enim peccata sola sunt illa quæ crimina nominantur, adulteria, fornicationes, sacrilegia, furta, rapinæ, falsa testimonia ; non ipsa sola peccata sunt . . . . Adtendere aliquid quod non debebas, peccatum est : audire aliquid libenter quod audiendum non fuit, peccatum est : cogitare aliquid quod non fuit cogitandum, peccatum est.—*Ib.*

Note 79.

Sed dedit Dominus noster post illud lavacrum regenerationis alia quotidiana remedia. Quotidiana nostra mundatio, Dominica oratio. Dicamus, et verum dicamus, quia et ipsa eleemosyna est : *Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. Date eleemosynas, et omnia munda sunt vobis.—Ib.*, t. v., p. 744–5, § 9 and 10.

Note 80.

Ecce tota Ecclesia dicit, *Dimitte nobis debita nostra.* Habet ergo maculas et rugas. Sed confessione ruga extenditur, confessione macula abluitur. Stat Ecclesia in oratione, ut mundetur confessione, et quamdiu hîc vivitur, sic stat. Et cùm de corpore exierit unusquisque, dimittuntur ei omnia, quæ talia habebat ut dimitterentur debita ; quia et quotidianis precibus dimittuntur ; et tunc erit mundatus, et thesaurizatur Ecclesia in thesauros Domini aurum purum ; ac per hoc in the sauros Domini Ecclesia est sine macula et ruga.—*S. Augustin.*, t. v., p. 604, D, E.

Note 81.

Quoniam propter ipsa peccata humana et tolerabilia, et tantò cre-

briora, quantò minora, constituit Deus in Ecclesia tempore misericordiæ prærogandæ quotidianam medicinam, ut dicamus, *Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris;* ut his verbis lota facie ad altare accedamus, et his verbis lota facie corpore Christi et sanguine communicemus.—*S. Augustin. Sermo de decem Chordis*, t. v., p. 68, A.

Note 82.

Noli te extollere super Deum; subde te Deo, adora, prosternere, confitere illi qui fecit te: quia nemo recreat, nisi qui creat; nemo reficit, nisi qui fecit; . . . ad medicum curras, medicum implores, qui ubique est. . . . Confitere ista omnia a Deo te habere quidquid boni habes, a te quidquid mali. Ne in bonis tuis illum contemnas, te laudes; ne in malis tuis illum accuses, te excuses: ipsa est vera confessio. . . . Habes enim sacerdotem per quem possis placare Deum tuum, et ipse cum Patre Deus est ad te, qui homo est propter te. Ita jubilabis in Psalmis, præveniens faciem ejus in confessione. Jubila in Psalmo: præveniens faciem ejus in confessione, accusa te; jubilans in Psalmo, lauda illum. Accusando te, et laudando eum qui fecit te, veniet qui mortuus est pro te, et vivificabit te.—*S. Augustin. opp.*, t. v., p. 585–6.

Note 83.

In tantum autem hominum aliquando iniquitas progreditur, ut etiam post actam pœnitentiam, post altaris reconciliationem, vel similia vel graviora committant, et tamen Deus facit etiam super tales oriri solem suum; nec minùs tribuit quam ante tribuebat largissima munera vitæ et salutis. Et quamvis eis in Ecclesia locus humillimæ pœnitentiæ non concedatur, Deus tamen super eos suæ patientiæ non obliviscitur. . . . . Quamvis ergo cautè salubriterque provisum sit, ut locus illius humillimæ pœnitentiæ semel in Ecclesia concedatur, ne medicina vilis minùs utilis esset ægrotis quæ tanto magis salubris est quanto minus contemptibilis fuerit: quis tamen audeat dicere Deo, Quare huic homini, qui post primam pœnitentiam rursus se laqueis iniquitatis obstringit, adhuc iterum parcis? Quis audeat dicere erga istos non agi, quod Apostolus agit, *Ignorans quia patientia Dei ad pœnitentiam te adducit?* Aut istis exceptis esse definitum quod scriptum est, *Beati omnes qui confidunt in eum?* Aut ad istos non pertinere quod dicitur, *Viriliter agite, et confortetur cor vestrum, omnes qui speratis in Dominum?*—*S. Augustin. Ep. ad Macedonium*, t. ii., p. 399, B, D.

Note 84.

Si peccaverit in te frater tuus, corripe eum inter te et ipsum solum. Quare? Quia peccavit in te. Quid est, in te peccavit? Tu scis quia peccavit. Quia enim secretum fuit, quando in te peccavit; secretum quære, cùm corrigis quod peccavit. Nam si solus nosti quia peccavit in te, et eum vis coram omnibus arguere, non es correptor, sed proditor. Adtende quemadmodum vir justus Joseph, tanto flagitio quod de uxore fuerat suspicatus, tanta benignitate pepercit . . . . voluit prodesse peccanti, non punire peccantem: *Cùm*, inquit, *nollet eam di-*

vulgare, voluit eam occultè dimittere.... Peccavit ergo in te frater tuus; si tu solus nosti, tunc verè in te solum peccavit.

Sic agamus, et sic agendum est, non solùm quando in nos peccatur, sed quando peccatur ab aliquo, ut ab altero nesciatur. In secreto debemus corripere, in secreto arguere; ne volentes publicè arguere, prodamus hominem. Nos volumus corripere et corrigere: quid si inimicus quærit audire quod puniat? Novit enim nescio quem homicidam Episcopus, et alius illum nemo novit. Ego volo publicè corripere, at tu quæris inscribere. Prorsus nec prodo, nec negligo: corripio in secreto; pono ante oculos Dei judicium; terreo cruentam conscientiam; persuadeo pœnitentiam. Hac caritate præditi esse debemus. Unde aliquando homines reprehendunt nos, quod quasi non corripiamus, aut putant nos scire quod nescimus, aut putant nos tacere quod scimus. Sed fortè quod scis, et ego scio: sed non coram te corripio, quia curare volo, non accusare. Sunt homines adulteri in domibus suis, in secreto peccatur, aliquando nobis produntur ab uxoribus suis, plerumque zelantibus, aliquando maritorum salutem quærentibus: nos non prodimus palam, sed in secreto arguimus. Ubi contigit malum, ibi moriatur malum. Non tamen vulnus illud negligimus; ante omnia ostendentes homini in tali peccato constituto sauciamque gerenti conscientiam, illud vulnus esse mortiferum, &c.—*S. Augustin.*, t. v., p. 310–11.

Note 85.

Puniendum est peccatum; si puniendum non esset, non peccatum esset. Præveni illum (scil. Deum); non vis ut ipse puniat, tu puni.... Converte te ad punienda peccata tua, quia impunita esse peccata non possunt. Puniendum ergo erit, aut a te, aut ab ipso; tu agnosce, ut ille ignoscat.—*S. Augustin. Enar. in Psal.* xliv., t. iv., p. 292, B.

Note 86.

Ingemisce ad Deum, et confitens illi peccata tua, MEREBERIS ab illo delectationem.—*Ib., in Psal.* lxxxv., p. 676–7.

Note 87.

Quomodo ergo distinguis vota, quæ reddis Deo? Ut illum laudes, te accuses: quia illius est misericordia, ut peccata nostra dimittat. Nam si vellet pro meritis agere, non inveniret nisi quos damnat.—*Ib., in Psal.* xciv., t. iv., p. 769, B.

Note 88.

Quod autem instituitur præter consuetudinem, ut quasi observatio sacramenti sit, approbare non possum, etiamsi multa hujusmodi propter nonnullarum vel sanctarum vel turbulentarum personarum scandala devitanda, liberiùs improbare non audeo. Sed hoc nimis doleo, quod multa quæ in divinis libris saluberrimè præcepta sunt, minùs curantur; et tam multis præsumtionibus plena sunt omnia, ut graviùs corripiatur qui per octavas suas terram nudo pede tetigerit, quàm qui mentem vinolentiâ sepelierit. Omnia itaque talia, quæ neque sanctarum Scripturarum auctoritatibus continentur, nec in conciliis episcopo-

rum statuta inveniuntur, nec consuetudine universæ Ecclesiæ roborata sunt, sed pro diversorum locorum diversis moribus innumerabiliter variantur, ita ut vix aut omnino numquam inveniri possint causæ, quas in eis instituendis homines secuti sint, ubi facultas tribuitur, sine ulla dubitatione resecanda existimo. Quamvis enim neque hoc inveniri possit, quomodo contra fidem sint: ipsam tamen religionem, quam paucissimis et manifestissimis celebrationum sacramentis misericordia Dei esse liberam voluit, servilibus oneribus premunt, ut tolerabilior sit conditio Judæorum, qui etiamsi tempus libertatis non agnoverunt, legalibus tamen sarcinis, non humanis præsumtionibus subjiciuntur.—*S. Augustin. opp.*, t. ii., p. 107, E.

Note 89.

De presbyteris pœnitentium curam gerentibus, et quomodo ea tempestate sublati fuerint.

Sub idem tempus, (A.D. 390) presbyteros Ecclesiarum qui pœnitentiæ præerant, placuit aboleri, idque ob hujusmodi causam. Postquam Novatiani se ab Ecclesia sejunxissent, eo quod cum illis qui persecutione Deciana lapsi fuerant, communicare noluissent, ex illo tempore Episcopi pœnitentiarium presbyterum albo Ecclesiastico adjecerunt, ut qui post baptismum lapsi essent, coram presbytero ad eam rem constituto, delicta sua confiterentur. Et apud alias quidem sectas hæc regula etiamnum perseverat. Soli vero Homoousiani, et qui cum illis in fide consentiunt Novatiani, presbyterum pœnitentiæ præpositum rejecerunt. Nam Novatiani ne initio quidem supplementum hoc admiserunt. Homoousiani verò qui nunc Ecclesias obtinent, cùm hoc institutum diu retinuissent, tandem Nectarii Episcopi temporibus abrogarunt, ob facinus quoddam quod in Ecclesia commissum fuerat. Mulier quædam nobilis ad pœnitentiarium presbyterum accedens, delicta post baptismum a se perpetrata singillatim confessa erat. Presbyter verò præcepit mulieri, ut jejuniis et orationibus continuis vacaret, quo scilicet unà cum delictorum confessione opus etiam pœnitentiæ conveniens ostenderet. Progressu temporis mulier aliud facinus confessa est, Ecclesiæ videlicet diaconum cum ipsa stupri consuetudinem habuisse. Id cùm dixisset, diaconus quidem Ecclesia ejectus est; populus verò graviter commoveri cœpit. Neque enim solum ob scelus quod patratum fuerat indignabantur, verum etiam eo quod labes haud mediocris atque infamia hoc facto adspersa videbatur Ecclesiæ. Cùm igitur eam ob causam Ecclesiastici homines dicteriis appeterentur, Eudæmon quidam Ecclesiæ presbyter, Alexandriâ oriundus, Episcopo Nectario suasit, ut pœnitentiarium quidem presbyterum expungeret, unumquemque vero pro arbitrio et pro animi sui conscientia ad sacramentorum communionem sineret accidere. Neque enim aliter fieri posse, ut Ecclesia ab omni probro libera esset.—*Socratis Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ*, lib. v., c. xix., p. 228.

Note 90.

Per idem tempus Nectarius Constantinopolitanus episcopus, presbyterum illum qui præpositus erat pœnitentibus, primus ex Ecclesia sus-

tulit. Cujus exemplum omnes fere episcopi postea sunt secuti. Quid autem hoc sit, et unde originem sumpserit, et quam ob causam sublatum sit, alii quidem aliter fortasse narrant. Ego vero ea dicam quæ sentio. Cum in nullo penitus peccare, divinioris cujusdam naturæ sit, et humanâ præstantioris; pœnitentibus vero, etiamsi sæpius deliquerint, veniam dare Deus præceperit: cumque in petendâ veniâ peccatum necessario confiteri oporteat; grave ac molestum ab initio juremerito visum est sacerdotibus, tanquam in theatro, circumstante totius Ecclesiæ multitudine, crimina sua evulgare. Itaque ex presbyteris aliquem, qui vitæ integritate spectatissimus esset, et taciturnitate ac prudentia polleret, huic officio præfecerunt: ad quem accedentes ii qui deliquerant, actus suos confitebantur. Ille vero pro cujusque delicto, quid aut facere singulos, aut luere oporteret, pœnæ loco indicens, absolvebat confitentes, a se ipsis pœnas criminum exacturos. Verum Novatianis quidem qui nullam rationem habent pœnitentiæ, nihil hac re opus fuit. Apud reliquas autem sectas, hic mos etiamnum perseverat. Et in Occidentalibus Ecclesiis, ac præcipue in Ecclesia Romana, studiose observatur. Illic enim in propatulo est pœnitentium locus: in quo illi stant mœsti, ac veluti lugentes. Peractisque jam missarum solemnibus, exclusi a communione sacrorum quæ initiatis præberi mos est, cum gemitu ac lamentis pronos se in terram objiciunt. Tum Episcopus cum lacrymis ex adverso occurrens, pariter ipse humi provolvitur, et universa Ecclesiæ multitudo simul confitens, lacrymis perfunditur. Posthæc vero primus exsurgit Episcopus, ac prostratos erigit: Privatim autem unusquisque sua sponte se macerans, aut jejuniis, aut illuvie, aut ciborum abstinentia, vel aliis quibus jussus est modis, tempus quantumcumque ipsi ab Episcopo constitutum est exspectat. Ubi vero præstitutus dies advenit, tanquam debito quodam persoluto, a pœna commissi sceleris liberatur, et reliquo Ecclesiæ populo sociatur. *Hæc Episcopi urbis Romæ, jam inde ab ultima vetustate ad nostram usque ætatem custodiunt. In Constantinopolitana autem Ecclesia, certus presbyter constitutus erat qui pœnitentibus præesset.* Donec matrona quædam nobilis, ob peccata quæ confessa fuerat, jussa ab hoc presbytero jejunare, ac Deum suppliciter orare; dum hujus rei causâ in Ecclesia moraretur, a diacono se stupratam esse prodidit. Quo cognito, plebs omnis vehementer succensuit, eo quod contumelia illata esset Ecclesiæ, nec mediocri probro expositi erant sacri ordinis viri. Nectarius vero, cum diu multumque dubitasset quidnam in hoc negotio agendum esset, eum qui stuprum admiserat, diaconatu exuit. Cumque nonnulli consilium ei dedissent, ut unicuique, prout sibi conscius esset, ac fiduciam sui haberet, ad sacrorum mysteriorum communionem accedendi liberam faceret potestatem, presbyterum qui agendæ pœnitentiæ præpositus erat, abolevit. Atque ex eo tempore id firmum ac stabile permansit: vetustate, eique adjuncta gravitate ac severitate, jam tum, ut opinor, in laxam ac dissolutam vivendi rationem paulatim delapsâ. Nam antea, ut equidem existimo, minora erant peccata, tum ob verecundiam eorum qui sua ipsi delicta euntiabant, tum ob severitatem judicum qui ad id erant constituti.—*Sozom. Hist. Ecc.*, lib. vii., c. 16.

Note 91.

Nam qui correptus deploraverat, et ut lacrymavit, veniam obtinuit. Contentus enim est Judex misericors et lacrymis.—*S. Chrysost. Sermo de Adam, Sodomitis, Achab, et Pœnitent.*, t. i., p. 467.

Note 92.

Confiteamur illi multiplicem confessionem.... Assumentes vocem illam publicani, qui pectus suum tundebat, et se, sicut Pharisæus, non jactabat:.... Quid ergo dicebat? *Propitius esto mihi peccatori.* Numquid singula facinora sua Deo enarrabat, quasi nescienti? Aut poterat in memoria tenere ex initio nativitatis suæ quæ commiserat flagitiosus publicanus, reus omnium malorum? Sed collectè summatimque clamavit et dixit, Quia nihil boni in me habeo quod dicam de me, sed totum malum sentio in me; confitebor tibi Deo bono, qui non punis confitentes, sed liberas ad te confugientes: *Propitius esto mihi pe catori.* Nullus desperet de malis suis, nullus præsumat de meritis suis. —*S. Chrysost. Hom. in Psal.* xxix., t. i., p. 726, D.

Note 93.

Quando autem Dominus justificat, quis est qui condemnet? Non enim dixit Nathan, Quia ego concedo; sed *Dominus*, inquit, *transtulit peccatum tuum*.... Et post hæc verba abiit propheta in domum suam. —*S. Chrysost. Hom. in Psal.* l., t. i., p. 843, C.

Note 94.

Et tu, O David, quoniam mœchatus es, et homicidium perpetrasti, ideo pœnituisti et remissionem a Deo meruisti. Propterea temetipsum publicas, ut siquis est mœchus, et homicida, discat quoniam si conversus pœnituerit, potest ad salutem venire.—*Ib.*, p. 843, D.

Note 95.

Neque enim te ad theatrum duco conservorum tuorum, nec te cogo peccata tua hominibus enunciare: conscientiam tuam Deo expone; ei ostende facta et vulnera; et ab eo medicinam pete. Ostende te non exprobanti, sed curanti. Ut enim taceas, tamen scit ille omnia.—*S. Chrysost. de Publicano et Pharisæo, Homil.*, t. i., p. 1266, D.

Note 96.

Suavis est Domino disputatio illius, qui per humilem confessionem se indicat scienti Deo, et cui se indicat nescienti Deus. De hac autem tali disputatione oritur delectatio: quia confessio non in se gloriantis, sed in agnitionem Dei proficit.—*S. Prosperi Aquitani opp., in Psal.* ciii., v. 34, *Expositio*, p. 391.

Note 97.

Dicuntur autem ista ex eorum persona, qui veniam conversi precantur; et exempla commemorantur illorum, in quos etiam peccatores dives apparuit misericordia Dei. Incipit ergo iste Psalmus, sicut ille,

Confitemini Domino : sed ibi sequitur, *et invocate nomen ejus :* hîc autem, *Quoniam bonus, quoniam in sæculum misericordia ejus.* Confessio igitur peccatorum habet laudationem Dei : quoniam qui indulgentiam petit, cum spe debet orare, et cum laude ejus misericordiæ quam credit æternam.—*Ib., in Psal.* cv., v. 1, p. 397.

Note 98.

Magnificentia Domini circa nos in eo apparet, quòd nullis præcedentibus meritis confitentem justificat peccatorem : ut *Ubi abundavit peccatum, superabundet gratia ;* per quam excitata est etiam ipsa confessio ; ut nemo in se extollatur, sed *Qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur.* Quia et confessio peccatoris, et magnificentia justificationis, opus Domini est.—*Ib., in Psal.* cx., v. 3, p. 419.

Note 99.

Bona est peccati confessio, si curatio consequatur. Nam quid prodest detegere plagam, et non adhibere medicinam ?—*Ib.*, p. 557. *Sentent. ex Augustino.*

Note 100.

Apud misericordiam Dei plurimùm valet confessio pœnitentis, quem facit peccator confitendo propitium, quem negando non facit nescium. —*Ib.*, p. 577.

Note 101.

Benè currit ad remissionem peccatorum, qui displicet sibi. Apud Judicem enim justum et misericordem, qui se accusat, excusat.—*Ib.*, p. 570.

Note 102.

Det peccatori veniam peccator, et æquâ
Conciliet Dominum conditione sibi.
Cujus judicium de nostro examine pendet,
Quod serimus metimus, quod damus accipimus.
S. Prosperi Aquit. opp., p. 638.

Note 103.

Multiplex misericordia Dei ita lapsibus subvenit humanis, ut non solum per baptismi gratiam, sed etiam per pœnitentiæ medicinam spes vitæ reparetur æternæ, ut qui regenerationis dona violassent, proprio se judicio condemnantes, ad remissionem criminum pervenirent : sic divinæ bonitatis præsidiis ordinatis, ut indulgentia Dei nisi supplicationibus Sacerdotum nequeat obtineri. Mediator enim Dei et hominum, homo Christus Jesus, hanc Præpositis Ecclesiæ tradidit potestatem, ut et confitentibus actionem pœnitentiæ darent, et eosdem salubri satisfactione purgatos, ad communionem sacramentorum per januam reconciliationis admitterent. . . . Multum enim utile ac necessarium est, ut peccatorum reatus ante ultimum diem Sacerdotali supplicatione solvatur.—*Leonis Magni opp.*, t. i., p. 302.

Note 104.

Illam etiam contra Apostolicam regulam præsumtionem, quam nuper agnovi a quibusdam illicita usurpatione committi, modis omnibus constituo submoveri: ne videlicet de singulorum peccatorum genere, libello scripta professio publicetur: cùm reatus conscientiarum sufficiat solis sacerdotibus indicari confessione secreta. Quamvis enim plenitudo fidei videatur esse laudabilis, quæ propter Dei timorem apud homines erubescere non veretur; tamen quia non omnium hujusmodi sunt peccata, ut ea qui pœnitentiam poscunt non timeant publicare; removeatur tam improbabilis consuetudo: ne multi a pœnitentiæ remediis arceantur, dum aut erubescunt, aut metuunt inimicis suis sua facta reserari, quibus possint legum constitutione percelli. Sufficit enim illa confessio, quæ primùm Deo offertur, tum etiam Sacerdoti, qui pro delictis pœnitentium precator accedit. Tunc enim demum plures ad pœnitentiam poterunt provocari, si populi auribus non publicetur conscientia confitentis.—*Leonis Mag. Epis. ad universos Epis.*, t. i., p. 356.

Note 105.

Horum profectò nunc in Ecclesia Episcopi tenent. Ligandi atque solvendi auctoritatem suscipiunt, qui gradum regiminis sortiuntur.... Sæpe in solvendis ac ligandis subditis suæ voluntatis motus, non autem causarum merita sequitur. Unde fit, ut ipsa hac ligandi et solvendi potestate se privet, qui hanc pro suis voluntatibus, et non pro subjectorum moribus exercet.

Causæ ergo pensandæ sunt, et tunc ligandi atque solvendi potestas exercenda. Videndum est quæ culpa præcessit, aut quæ sit pœnitentia secuta post culpam; ut quos omnipotens Deus per compunctionis gratiam visitat, illos Pastoris sententia absolvat. Tunc enim vera est absolutio præsidentis, cùm interni arbitrium sequitur judicis. Quod bene quatriduani mortui resuscitatio illa significat, quæ videlicet demonstrat, quia priùs mortuum Dominus vocavit et vivificat, dicens: *Lazare, veni foras:* et postmodum is qui vivens egressus fuerat a discipulis est solutus, sicut scriptum est: *Cumque egressus esset qui fuerat ligatus institis, tunc dixit discipulis: Solvite eum, et sinite abire.* Ecce illum discipuli jam viventem solvunt, quem Magister resuscitaverat mortuum. Si enim discipuli Lazarum mortuum solverent, fœtorem magis ostenderent quam virtutem. Ex qua consideratione intuendum est, quòd illos nos debemus per pastoralem auctoritatem solvere, quos auctorem nostrum cognoscimus per suscitantem gratiam vivificare.... Hæc de solutionis ordine breviter dixerim: ut sub magno moderamine Pastores Ecclesiæ vel solvere studeant, vel ligare.—*S. Greg. Mag. in Evangel.*, lib. ii., *Hom.* xxvi., § 5 and 6. t. i., p. 1555.

Note 106.

Sed pœnitentiam agere digne non possumus, nisi modum quoque ejusdem pœnitentiæ cognoscamus. Pœnitentiam quippe agere, est et perpetrata mala plangere, et plangenda non perpetrare. Nam qui sic

alia deplorat, ut tamen alia committat, adhuc pœnitentiam agere aut dissimulat, aut ignorat.—*Ib. opp.*, t. i., p. 1609, C.

Note 107.

Quod verò Dulcedo tua in suis Epistolis subjunxit importunam se mihi existere, quoadusque scribam mihi esse revelatum, quia peccata tua dimissa sunt, rem difficilem etiam et inutilem postulasti. Difficilem quidem, quia ego indignus sum cui revelatio fieri debeat. Inutilem verò, quia secura de peccatis tuis fieri non debes, nisi cùm jam in die vitæ tuæ ultimo plangere eadem peccata minimè valebis. Certè Paulus Apostolus jam ad tertium cælum ascenderat, in Paradisum quoque ductus fuerat, arcana verba audierat, quæ homini loqui non liceret: et tamen adhuc trepidans, dicebat, *Castigo corpus meum, et servituti subjicio, ne fortè aliis prædicans, ipse reprobus efficiar.* Adhuc timet qui jam ad cælum ducitur, et jam timere non vult qui adhuc in terra conversatur? Perpende, Dulcissima Filia, quia mater negligentiæ solet esse securitas. Habere ergo in hac vita non debes securitatem, per quam negligens reddaris. Scriptum est enim, *Beatus vir qui semper est pavidus.*—*Ib. opp.*, t. ii., p. 869.

Note 108.

Et quidem quòd nostram vos velle gratiam habere petitis, convenit ut Redemtori nostro pro his talibus satisfacere tota intentione mentis, ut dignum est, cum lacrymis debeatis; quia si illi satisfactum non fuerit, quid nostra relaxatio vel gratia poterit certè conferre?—*Ib. opp.*, p. 929, *Ep. ad Marcellum Procon.*

Note 109.

Pœnitentiam enim verè agere, est commissa plangere, sed iterum plangenda declinare.—*Ib. opp.*, t. ii., p. 1132, C.

Note 110.

Exaudi, Domine, preces nostras, et tibi confitentium parce peccatis: ut quos conscientiæ reatus accusat, indulgentia tuæ miserationis absolvat. Per Dominum.—*Ib.*, t. iii., p. 213, E.

Note 111.

Præveniat hunc famulum tuum, quæsumus, Domine, misericordia tua: ut omnes iniquitates ejus celeri indulgentia deleantur. Per Dominum. —*Ib.*, p. 214.

Note 112.

Præsta, quæsumus, Domine, huic famulo tuo dignum pœnitentiæ fructum: ut Ecclesiæ tuæ sanctæ, a cujus integritate deviarat peccando, admissorum reddatur innoxius veniam consequendo. Per Dominum nostrum.—*Ib.*

Note 113.

Pœnitentia appellata, quasi punientia, eo quod ipse homo in se pu-

niat pœnitendo quod malè admisit : nam nihil aliud agunt quos veraciter pœnitet, nisi ut id quod male fecerunt impunitum esse non sinant. . . .

Satisfactio autem est causas peccatorum et suggestiones excludere, et ultra peccatum non iterare.

Reconciliatio vero est quæ post complementum pœnitentiæ adhibetur.

Exomologesis Græco vocabulo dicitur, quod Latinè *Confessio* interpretatur, cujus nominis duplex significatio est. Aut enim in laude intelligitur confessio, sicut est, *Confiteor tibi Pater, Domine cæli et terræ.* Aut dum quisque confitetur sua peccata ab eo indulgenda cujus indeficiens est misericordia. Ex hoc ergo Græco vocabulo exprimitur et frequentatur *exomologesis*, qua delictum nostrum Domino confitemur. . . .

Confessio autem erroris, professio est desinendi. . . . Confessio autem antecedit, remissio sequitur : cæterum extra veniam est qui peccatum cognoscit, nec cognitum confitetur. Itaque exomologesis prosternendi et humiliandi hominis disciplina est, habitu atque victu, sacco et cineri incubare : corpus sordibus obscurare : animum mœroribus dejicere.—*Isidor. Hispal. opp.*, p. 52–3.

Note 114.

Ipsa autem pœnitentia juxta qualitatem delictorum est ; nam sicut levia peccata occulta oratione delentur : ita gravia coram Ecclesia per pœnitentiam et satisfactionem remittuntur.—*Ib.*, p. 240, B.

Note 115.

Pœnitentia autem nomen sumpsit a pœna, qua anima cruciatur, et caro mortificatur. Hi vero qui pœnitentiam agunt, proinde capillos et barbam nutriunt, ut demonstrent abundantiam criminum, quibus caput peccatoris gravatur. . . . Quod vero in cilicio prosternentur (per cilicium quippe recordatio est peccatorum), propter hœdos ad sinistram futuros. Inde ergo confitentes in cilicio prosternimur. . . . Cinere autem asperguntur, ut sint memores, quia cinis et pulvis sunt. . . . Pœnitentiæ autem remedium Ecclesia Catholica in spe indulgentiæ fidenter alligat ad exercendos homines, et post unum baptismi sacramentum, quod singulari traditione commendatum, sollicitè prohibet iterandum, medicinali remedio pœnitentiæ subrogat adjumentum . . . . honorum duntaxat dignitate servata ; ita ut a Sacerdotibus et Levitis Deo tantum teste fiat ; a cæteris vero astante coram Deo solenniter sacerdote ; ut hoc tegat fructuosa confessio, quod temerarius appetitus aut ignorantiæ notatur contraxisse neglectus : ut sicut in baptismo omnes iniquitates remitti, vel per martyrium nulli peccatum credimus imputari : ita pœnitentiæ compunctione fructuosa, universa fateamur deleri peccata. Lacrymæ enim pœnitentium, apud Deum pro baptismate reputantur. —*Ib.*, p. 406, C ; p. 407, A.

Note 116.

Quamvis per pœnitentiam propitiatio peccatorum fit, sine metu tamen homo esse non debet, quia pœnitentis satisfactio divino tantum

pensatur judicio, non humano. Proinde quia miseratio Dei occulta est, sine intermissione flere necesse est. Neque enim unquam oportet pœnitentem habere de peccatis securitatem. Nam securitas negligentiam parit: negligentia autem sæpè incautum ad vitia transacta reducit.—*Ib.*, p. 440, H.

Note 117.

Non posse peccata remitti ei qui in se peccanti debita non remittit. Formam enim nobis indulgentiæ Deus ex merito conditionis nostræ imposuit, dum ita orare nos præcipit, *Remitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et nos remittimus debitoribus nostris.*—*Ib.*, p. 466, F.

Note 118.

Confiteor tibi, Domine cœli et terræ, tibique bone et benignissime Jesu, unà cum Sancto Spiritu, coram sanctis Angelis tuis, et coram sanctis tuis, coram hoc altari, et Sacerdote tuo, quia in peccatis conceptus, et in peccatis natus, et in peccatis nutritus, et in peccatis post baptisma usque ad hanc horam sum conversatus. Confiteor etiam, quia peccavi nimis in superbia, inani gloria, in extollentia tam oculorum quàm vestium, et omnium actuum meorum, in invidia, in odio, in avaritia tam honoris quàm pecuniæ, in ira, in acedia, in ventris ingluvie, in luxuria sodomitica, in sacrilegiis, &c. Similem reperire est priscorum Germanorum apud Goldastum libro de rebus Germanicis. —*S. Greg. Mag.*, t. iii., p. 452–3. *Not. et observ. Hug. Menardi ad Lib. Sac.*

Note 119.

Extat etiam confessio S. Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi, litteris consignata a Redemto ejus clerico, cùm, impendente morte, palam confessus est in æde S. Vincentii generatim duntaxat, nihil particulatim exprimens.—*Ib.*

Note 120.

Extat etiam confessio Rotberti Cenomanensis Episcopi, edita a doctissimo viro Jacobo Sirmondo, S. J. (t. iii., Conciliorum Galliæ), quam morti proximus misit per Epistolam, ad Episcopos qui erant in obsidione urbis Andegavensis cum Carolo Calvo Imperatore; in qua etiam nullum speciale crimen confitetur: sed tantùm se abominabilem et execrandum peccatorem esse profitetur.—*Ib.*

Note 121.

In vetustissimo codice MS. Bibliothecæ Corbiensis, cui titulus est, *Ordo orationum*, habetur confessio S. Fulgentii, quam hîc subjicere non pigebit.

Incipit Confessio S. Fulgentii Episcopi ad pœnitentiam dandam.

Ego confiteor tibi, Domine, Pater cœli et terræ, coram hoc altari tuo sancto, et istius loci reliquiis, et coram hoc Sacerdote tuo, omnia peccata mea, et omnia quæcumque Dei pietas ad memoriam reducit de cogitationibus turpibus, sive sermonibus otiosis et immundis, et quod ego contra præceptum Dei feci. Confiteor etiam omnia cordis et cor-

poris mei vitia, sacrilegium, invidias, detractiones, perjuria, furta, maledicta, convitia, turpiloquia, scurrilitates, mendacia, irrisiones, insultationes, simulationes, murmurationes, adulationes, tristitias, vigilias inutiles et Deo despicabiles, carnales concupiscentias pessimas: et propter corporis mei suavitatem et delectationem, Dei præcepta proposui, et transgressus fui per superbiam et elationem, et desidiam et pigritiam. Voluntates immundas perpetravi, fornicationes, pollutiones, luxurias, ebrietates, comessationes, homicidia manifestè et occultè in corpore et animo peregi. Patri meo, et matri meæ, fratribus et sororibus, patruis et amitis, et consobrinis, sive omnibus propinquis et parentibus meis, secundùm Dei præceptum et Dei voluntatem honoris obsequium non exhibui. Seniorem carnalem, et amicos plus in malo quàm in bono, auscultavi et obediens fui. Omnes Christianos, sicut Deus præcepit, non dilexi. Semper aliis malum, non bonum exemplum et documentum, præbui et ostendi. Dominicos dies et solemnitates sanctorum non dignè, nec Deo acceptabiliter duxi, nec custodivi: et nescientibus non annuntiavi, sed ebriosè et luxuriosè in ipsis me pollui, et alios ad hoc incitavi. Latrocinium et furtum abscondi et comedi, et absconditibus consensi. Infirmos et in carcere positos non visitavi, nudos non operui. Hospites propter Deum non suscepi, nec eorum pedes lavi: esurientes non refeci, dolentes et flentes non consolatus sum: inter se discordantes, sive patentes, sive omnes Christianos, plus ad iram, quàm ad pacem provocavi. Ego confiteor, quia multùm peccavi in visu, auditu, gustu, odoratu, et tactu; et multa mala cogitavi et perpetravi. Ego confiteor, quia in sancta Ecclesia multa mala cogitavi, et locutus fui inordinatè et superbè; in sancta Ecclesia steti, sedi, osculatus sum, aspexi, pertexi, jacui, consensi. Vasa sancta, et omne ministerium sanctum, pollutus tetigi. Osculo nefando pollutus sum. Et super sanctum altare, et in consecrata Ecclesia, et in benedicta cruce, et super sanctas reliquias juravi, et verba perjura, et mendacia protuli, et perjuravi. Confiteor etiam, quia tibi, Omnipotenti Deo, et omnibus Sanctis, et omnibus bonis hominibus inobediens fui, et interiùs exteriusque infidelis et molestus fui, contentiosus, odiosus, invidus, iracundus, avarus, cupidus, rapax, incredulus, immitis. Et meam orationem negligenter in conspectu Dei effudi propter cogitationes inanes, et duro corde. Ego corpus Domini et sanguinem ejus, polluto corde et corpore, sine confessione et pœnitentia, sciens indignus accepi. Episcopos, et probos Abbates, Monachos, Canonicos, et omnem Clerum Ecclesiæ Dei non amavi, non dilexi, nec eis obsequium honoris præbui, sicut Deus præcepit. Me ipsum per carnalia desideria, et per malas cogitationes, et per malam voluntatem, et per mala opera contaminavi, dehonestavi, perdidi, et voluntate Diabolo consensi. De his omnibus et aliis innumerabilibus, quæ propter multitudinem peccatorum, criminum, et scelerum meorum recordari non sufficio: et quod ego contra Dei voluntatem, et omnium sanctorum, et legem Christianam feci, et duro corde perpetravi, sive ignoranter, sive scienter, sive in cogitatione mala, sive in verbo, seu in opere, vel etiam assiduitate vel delectatione peccati, sive in die, sive in nocte, horis atque momentis, sive vigilans, sive dormiens, seu qualicumque causa cogitassem aut facere voluissem,

et opere perpetrassem contra Dei voluntatem : ic ego hodie omnia tibi Deo, ac Domino cœli et terræ confiteor coram sancto altari tuo in pura et vera confessione, et voluntate ad emendandum, et hæc peccata deinceps dimittenda; ut tu Deus omnipotens, qui dixisti, *Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut convertatur et vivat*, miserearis, et parcas, et remittas, et deleas omnia peccata, crimina, atque facinora, et delicta mea præterita, præsentia, et futura, et perducas me ad vitam æternam. Amen. Supplico te, Dei Sacerdos, ut de his omnibus sis mihi testis in die judicii : ne gaudeat de me inimicus meus : et dignare pro me Dei misericordiam deprecari : ut donet mihi veniam indulgentiæ, et omnium peccatorum meorum remissionem.

Responsio Sacerdotis.

Misereatur tui omnipotens Deus, et donet tibi veram indulgentiam de peccatis tuis, et ulciscatur te de omnibus inimicis tuis invisibilibus, donet tibi Deus consilium in isto seculo, et perducat te feliciter ad vitam æternam.

Hactenus Confessio S. Fulgentii Episcopi. . . . In supra citato codice MS. Monasterii S. Remigii, Remis siti, est alia confessio huic similis : sed quia eadem habetur in ordine Romano, a qua tantùm paucissimis verbis discrepat, non mihi visum est illam hîc exscribere. Hanc in eodem codice MS. excipit hæc unica Responsio Sacerdotis.

Misereatur tui Omnipotens Deus, et dimittat tibi omnia peccata tua, liberet te ab omni opere malo, conservet te in omni opere bono, et perducat te per intercessionem omnium sanctorum ad gloriam sempiternam. Amen.—*Greg. Mag. opp.*, t. iii., p. 452–3.

Note 122.

Hic Halitgarius fuit Episcopus Cameracensis. . . . Vixit temporibus Ludovici Pii et Caroli Calvi, a quo ultimo missus est Constantinopolim ad Michaëlem Imperatorem, &c.—*Ib.*, p. 462.

Note 123.

Incipit qualiter suscipere debeant pœnitentem Episcopi vel Presbyteri.

Quotiescumque Christiani ad pœnitentiam accedunt, jejunia damus, et nos communicare cum eis debemus jejunio unam aut duas septimanas, aut quantum possumus; ut non dicatur nobis quod Judæorum Sacerdotibus dictum est a Domino Salvatore, *Væ vobis, Legisperiti, qui adgravatis homines, et imponitis super humeros eorum onera gravia, ipsi autem uno digito vestro non tangitis sarcinas ipsas.* Nemo autem potest sublevare cadentem sub pondere, nisi inclinaverit se ut porrigat manum : neque ullus medicorum vulnera infirmantium potest curare, nisi fœtoribus particeps fuerit : ita quoque nullus sacerdotum vel Pontifex, peccatorum vulnera curare potest, aut animabus peccata auferre nisi præstante sollicitudine, et oratione lacrymarum. . . . Ideoque et nos, si viderimus aliquem in peccatis jacentem, festinemus eum ad pœnitentiam per nostram doctrinam vocare. . . . Sicut ergo superiùs diximus, humiliare se debent Episcopi, sive Presbyteri, et cum tristitia, gemitu, lacrymisque orare, non solùm pro suis delictis, sed etiam pro

Christianorum omnium, ut possint cum B. dicere Paulo, *Quis infirmatur, et ego non infirmor, quis scandalizatur, et ego non uror ?*

. . . . Videns autem ille, qui ad pœnitentiam venit, sacerdotem tristem et lacrymantem pro suis facinoribus, magis ipse timore Dei perculsus, ampliùs tristatur, et exhorresect peccata sua.—*S. Greg. Mag. opp.*, t. iii.; *Not. et observ. in Lib. Sac.*, p. 462–3.

Note 124.

Si quis fortè non potuerit jejunare, et habet unde dare ad redimendum, si dives fuerit, pro septem Hebdomadibus det solidos XX. Si autem non habuerit tantum unde dare, det solidos X. Si autem multùm paupĕr fuerit, det solidos III. Sed unusquisque adtendat, cui dare debet, sive pro redemptione captivorum, sive super sancto altari, sive pauperibus Christianis erogandum, &c.—*Ib.*, p. 464, A, B.

Note 125.

Precor, Domine, clementiæ et misericordiæ tuæ majestatem : ut famulo tuo illi peccata et facinora sua confitenti veniam relaxare digneris, et præteritorum criminum culpas indulgeas, qui humeris tuis ovem perditam reduxisti, qui Publicani precibus confessione placatus exaudisti. Tu etiam huic famulo tuo placare, Domine, tu ejus precibus benignus aspira, ut in confessione placabilis permaneat. Fletus ejus et petitio perpetuam clementiam tuam celeriter exoret, sanctisque altaribus et sacrificiis restitutus, spei rursum æternæ cælestis gloriæ mancipetur. Per Dominum.—*Ib.*, E.

Note 126.

Item oratio manus impositionis.

Domine Sancte, Pater Omnipotens, æterne Deus, qui per Jesum Christum filium tuum Dominum nostrum vulnera nostra curare dignatus es, te supplices rogamus, et petimus nos humiles tui sacerdotes ; ut precibus nostris aurem tuæ pietatis inclinare digneris, remittasque omnia crimina, et peccata universa condones, desque huic famulo tuo pro suppliciis veniam, pro mœrore lætitiam, pro morte vitam. Ipse cælestis apicis devolutus est, et de tua misericordia confidens ad bonam pacem præmii tui atque cælestia pervenire mereatur ad vitam æternam. Per Dominum.—*Ib.*, p. 464–5.

Note 127.

Incipit reconciliatio pœnitentis.

In primis dicit Psalmum L. cum Antiphona, *Cor mundum.* Deus, humani generis benignissime Conditor, et misericordissime Reformator, qui in reconciliatione lapsorum etiam me, qui misericordia tua primus indigeo, servire effectibus gratiæ tuæ per ministerium Sacerdotale voluisti, ut cessante merito supplicis, mirabilior fieret clementia Redemtoris. Per Dominum nostrum.

Omnipotens Sempiterne Deus, confitenti tibi huic famulo tuo pro tua pietate peccata relaxa, ut non plus ei noceat conscientiæ reatus ad pœnam, quàm indulgentia tuæ pietatis ad veniam. Per Dominum.

Alia.

Omnipotens et Misericors Deus, qui peccatorum indulgentiam in confessione celeri posuisti: succurrere lapsis, miserere confessis: ut quod delictorum catena constringit, magnitudo tuæ pietatis absolvat. Per Dominum.—*S. Greg. Mag.*, t. iii., p. 465.

Note 128.

Incipit Judicium pœnitentis.

Si quis Episcopus aut aliquis ordinatus, homicidium fecerit, ... decem annos pœniteat, tres ex his in pane et aqua. Si laicus, tres annos pœniteat, unum ex his in pane et aqua, &c.—*Ib.*

Note 129.

Omnes miserias meas coram Deo effundam, si forte illa sua magna pietas moveat eum. Confitebor ei peccata mea, cui omnia nuda sunt et aperta; quem fallere non possum, quia Sapientia est: nec effugere, quia ubique est. Audi ergo piissime Deus confessionem meam: et respice ad pietatem tuam, et fac mecum secundum misericordiam tuam.—*S. Bernardi de inter. domo.*, c. xxix., p. 255, I.

Note 130.

Quia miseratio Dei occulta est, sine intermissione flere necesse est. Soror charissima, audi beati Isidori verba: "Non oportet pœnitentem de peccatis suis habere securitatem. Quare? Quia securitas negligentiam parit, negligentia verò sæpe hominem incautum ad priora peccata reducit."—*S. Bernardi ad Soror.*, *Serm.* xxvii., p. 302, B.

Note 131.

Date nobis (inquiunt) *de oleo vestro.* Stulta petitio. *Vix justus salvabitur*, et vix etiam sanctis justitiæ suæ oleum sufficit ad salutem, quanto minus et sibi et proximis? Noë, Daniel et Job nec filium liberabunt, sed sicut anima quæ peccaverit, ipsa morietur: sic anima quæ justitiam fecerit, sola salvabitur.—*S. Bernardi Serm. de sept. Grad. Conf.*, p. 399, G.

Note 132.

Ut qui in persecutionis infestatione supplantati ab adversario, vel lapsi fuissent, ac sacrificiis se illicitis maculassent, agerent diu pœnitentiam plenam: et si periculum infirmitatis urgeret, pacem sub ictu mortis acciperent. Nec enim fas erat, aut permittebat paterna pietas et divina clementia, ecclesiam pulsantibus claudi, et dolentibus et deprecantibus spei salutaris subsidium denegari: ut de sæculo recedentes, sine communicatione et pace Domini dimitterentur, quando permiserit ipse, qui legem dedit, *ut ligata in terris, etiam in cælis ligata essent:* solvi autem possint illic, quæ hic prius in ecclesia solverentur.—*Hard. Con.*, t. i., p. 134, E.

Note 133.

De his qui præter necessitatem prævaricati sunt, aut præter ablationem facultatum, aut præter periculum, vel aliquid hujusmodi, quod factum est sub tyrannide Licinii: placuit Synodo, quamvis humanitate probentur indigni, tamen eis benevolentiam commodari. Quicumque ergo veraciter pœnitudinem gerunt, tribus annis fideles inter audientes habeantur, et sex annis omni se contritione dejiciant, duobus autem annis sine oblatione populo in oratione communicent.—*Hard. Con.*, t. i., p. 327, D; *Concil. Nic.*, *Can. XI.*

Note 134.

Ut clerici vel continentes, ad viduas vel virgines, nisi jussu vel permissu episcoporum et presbyterorum non accedant. Et hoc non soli faciant, sed cum conclericis, vel cum his, cum quibus episcopus jusserit vel presbyter: nec ipsi episcopi aut presbyteri soli habeant accessum ad hujusmodi feminas, sed aut ubi clerici præsentes sint, aut graves aliqui Christiani.—*Con.*, t. i., p. 963.

Note 135.

Ut pœnitentibus, secundum peccatorum differentiam, episcopi arbitrio pœnitentiæ tempora decernantur.—*Ib.*, p. 964.

Note 136.

Ut presbyter, inconsulto episcopo, non reconciliet pœnitentem, nisi absente episcopo, et necessitate cogente. Cujuscumque autem pœnitentis publicum et evulgatissimum crimen est, quod universa ecclesia noverit, ante absidem manus ei imponatur.—*Ib.*

Note 137.

Ut sacerdos pœnitentiam imploranti absque personæ acceptione, pœnitentiæ leges injungat. — *Ib.*, *Can. LXXIV.*, *Conc. Carth. IV.*, *Hard. Con.*, t. i., p. 983.

Note 138.

Is qui pœnitentiam in infirmitate petit .... si continuo creditur moriturus, reconcilietur per manus impositionem, et infundatur ori ejus eucharistia. Si supervixerit .... subdatur statutis pœnitentiæ legibus, quamdiu sacerdos, qui pœnitentiam dedit, probaverit. — *Ib.*, *Can. LXXVI.*

Note 139.

Pœnitentes, qui in infirmitate viaticum eucharistiæ acceperint, non se credant absolutos sine manus impositione, si supervixerint.—*Ib. Can. LXXVIII.*

Note 140.

Item placuit, ut de pœnitente non admittatur ad clerum, nisi tantum, si necessitas aut usus exegerit, inter ostiarios deputetur, vel inter lecto-

res, ita ut evangelia et apostolum non legat. . . . Pœnitente vero dicimus de eo, qui post baptismum, aut pro homicidio aut pro diversis criminibus gravissimisque peccatis, publicam pœnitentiam gerens sub cilicio, divino fuerit reconciliatus altari.—*Concil.*, t. i., p. 990.

Note 141.

Pœnitentiam agere juxta antiquam canonum constitutionem in plerisque locis ab usu recessit, et neque excommunicandi neque reconciliandi, antiqui moris ordo servatur.—*Concil. Cabilonense*, c. xxv.; *Hard. Con.*, t. iv., p. 1036.

Note 142.

Non debere sanctimoniales in propriis mansionibus cum aliquibus masculis, clericis sive laicis, consanguineis sive extraneis, bibere sive comedere: . . . . Et cum nullo masculo eis colloquium habere liceat, nisi in auditorio, et ibi coram testibus.—*Ib.*, *Can. LXI.*, *Hard. Concil.*, t. iv., p. 1042.

Note 143.

Si propter officium clericatus, aut vidua visitatur, aut virgo, nunquam domum solus introëas, talesque habeto socios, quorum contubernio non infameris. . . . Solus cum sola secretè et absque arbitro vel teste, non sedeas. Si familiarius est aliquid loquendum, habet nutricem, majorem domus, virginem, viduam, maritatam; non est tam inhumana, ut nullum præter te habeat cui se audeat credere. Cavete omnes suspiciones; et quidquid probabiliter fingi potest, ne fingatur, ante devita. —*Con. Aquisgranense*, *Hard. Con.*, t. iv., p. 1107.

Note 144.

Presbyteris, qui in monasteriis puellaribus Missarum solemnia celebrare debent, extra monasterium sit locus et ecclesia, ubi cum ministris suis habitent, et divinæ servitutis obsequium expleant: et non nisi statuto tempore monasterium ingrediantur puellarum, et cum eis diaconus tantum, et subdiaconus, qui scilicet et vitæ honestate clarescant, et non se, sed Christum amare cupiant; nec sua quærant, sed quæ Jesu Christi; et non amplius ibi immorentur, nisi in Missarum celebrationibus ad sanctimoniales publice faciendis. Quibus rite ac devote celebratis, illico foras egrediantur. . . . Sed et hoc caveant, ut nulla illarum cum eisdem presbyteris, eorumque ministris aliquam sermocinationem familiarem habeant. Si qua igitur peccata sua sacerdoti confiteri voluerit, id in Ecclesia faciat, ut ab aliis videatur, sicut in dictis sanctorum patrum continetur: exceptis infirmis, quibus in domibus id facere necesse est. Nam presbyter diaconum et subdiaconum, qui utique boni sint testimonii, ob detractionem vitandam secum habeat, a quibus scilicet videatur, et suæ innocentiæ bonum testimonium exhibeatur.—*Concil. Aquisgran.*, *Lib.* 2, *Can. XXVII.*, *Hard. Con.*, t. iv., p. 1175.

Note 145.

Ut episcopus monasteria monachorum et sanctimonialium frequenter

introëat, et cum gravibus et religiosis personis, et in eorum vel in earum conventu residens, eorum vitam et conversationem diligenter discutiat; et si quid reprehensibile invenerit, corrigere satagat. Sanctimonialium etiam pudicitiam subtiliter investiget. Et si aliqua invenitur, quæ neglecto proposito castitatis, clerico aut laico impudenter misceatur, in privata custodia retrudatur, ubi quod malè commisit dignè pœniteat. Interdicat etiam ex auctoritate sanctorum canonum, ut nullus laicus aut clericus in earum claustris et secretis habitationibus accessum habeat; neque presbyteri, nisi tantum ad Missam: expleta Missa ad Ecclesias suas redeant.—*Synodus General. Rodomi*, c. x., *Hard. Con.*, t. vi., *Pars* 1, p. 206.

Note 146.

Nec presbyter solus cum sola femina fabulas misceat.... Nos vero etiam a matribus, amitis, sororibus, vel propinquis cavendum dicimus: ne forte illud eveniat quod in sancta scriptura legitur de Thamar sorore Absalom, quam Amnon frater suus male concupiscendo violavit; de Lot etiam, qui filias suas per ebrietatis vitium, similiter corrupit.—*Hard. Con.*, t. vi., *Pars* 1, p. 417, c. xiv.

Note 147.

De Confessione.

I.

Quando aliquis voluerit confessionem facere peccatorum suorum, viriliter agat, et non erubescat confiteri scelera et facinora, se accusando: quia inde venit indulgentia, et quia sine confessione nulla est venia: confessio enim sanat, confessio justificat.—*Hard. Con.*, t. vi., *Pars* 1, p. 664.

Note 148.

Interroga ipsum de sui ipsius moribus: extorque scelera, et quæ fecit propone omnia: sed hoc tecum semper recognoscens, ut uno et eodem modo nunquam judicabis divites et pauperes, liberos et servos, seniores et juvenes, firmos et infirmos, humiles et superbos, fortes et debiles, ordinatos et sæculares. Judex prudens prudenter distinguet de facto; quod videlicet, quomodo, ubi, et quando sit perpetratum. Quanto etiam quis potentior est, et majoris dignitatis, tanto gravius pro peccatis coram Deo et hominibus corrigendus est....—*Ib.*

Note 149.

V.

Confiteor Deo Omnipotenti, et confessario meo spirituali medico, omnia peccata quæ malorum spirituum inquinamento unquam perpetravi; sive in facto, sive in cogitatione, sive cum masculis, sive cum feminis, aliave creatura, sive secundum naturam, sive contra naturam.

VI.

Confiteor ingluviem ciborum, et mane et vesperi. Confiteor omni-

modam avaritiam, et invidiam, et detrectationem, et bilingue vitium, mendacitatem, et inanem jactantiam, et vaniloquium, prodigalitatem impiam, et cujusque generis fastum, qui effrenato huic corpori meo aliqualiter acciderit. Confiteor me frequentius fuisse peccati auctorem, peccati fautorem, peccati conscium, et peccati doctorem.

VII.

Confiteor animo meo perpetratum homicidium, perjuriam, seditionem, superbiam, et neglectum præceptorum Dei. Confiteor omnia quæ oculis unquam viderim, vel concupiscendo, vel vituperando indebite: etiam omnia quæ vel auribus audiverim vana et superflua, vel ore meo locutus fuerim.

VIII.

Confiteor etiam corporis mei peccata omnia, cutis, carnis, ossium et nervorum, renum et cartilaginum, linguæ et labiorum, faucium, dentium, et cæsariei, medullæ, et rei cujusque alterius, quæ vel mollis est vel dura, humida vel sicca. Confiteor baptismum meum me pejus observasse, quam Domino meo sum pollicitus, professionemque qua tenebar in Dei et sanctorum suorum laudem custodire, et in mei ipsius salutem æternam. Confiteor me horas meas canonicas sæpius neglexisse, sæpiusque pejerans Domini vitam et nomen ejus in vanum accepisse.

IX.

Rogo et obtestor Dominum meum pro his omnibus remissionem, ut in me nunquam ex insidiis prævaleat diabolus, ne forte moriar absque confessione, et peccatorum meorum emendatione: sicut hodie confessus sum omnia mea peccata coram Domino nostro Salvatore Christo, qui cælum et terram moderatur, et coram sacro isto altari, et reliquiis istis, et coram confessario meo et Domini Missali sacerdote: et sicut puram edidi et veracem confessionem, et prompti sum animi corrigere omnia peccata mea, et qua possim sedulitate ea semper postea declinare.

X.

Et tu, Jesu Christe Salvator mi, miserere animæ meæ, et remitte, precor, deletoque peccata mea et transgressiones meas, quæ vel olim vel recentius unquam perpetravi; et ducas me in sublime regnum tuum, ut illic verser cum electis et sanctis tuis absque fine et in æternum. Nunc et te humiliter obsecro, sacerdos Domini, ut tu mihi testis sis in die judicii, ut nullam in me habeat diabolus, et ut tu apud Dominum mihi sis causidicus: ut peccata mea et transgressiones commissas corrigam, et ab ejusmodi aliis committendis desistam. Ad hoc præstandum adjuvet me Dominus ille, qui vivit et regnat absque termino in æternum. Amen.—*Hard. Con.*, t. vi., *Pars* 1, p. 665–6.

Note 150.

VI.

Si laïcus alium sine causa occiderit, pane et aqua septem jejunet an-

nos, et eorundem quatuor prout confessarius suus instituerit. Emensa vero septennali illa pœnitentia, scelus tamen semper lugeat omni qua poterit industria; propterea quod incognitum est hominibus qualiter apud Deum valuit ejus pœnitentia.

VII.

Qui alterum voluerat occidisse, et implere nequierat desiderium, annos tres jejunet: unum scilicet pane et aqua, eorumque duas prout confessarius suus ipsi imposuerit.

VIII.

Si laïcus alium invitus occiderit, tres annos jejunato, unum pane et aqua, et eorum duos ut confessarius ejus indicaverit, et transgressiones suas semper deplorato.

IX.

Si fuerit Subdiaconus, jejunet sex annos.

Si fuerit Diaconus, jejunet septem annos.

Si fuerit Missalis sacerdos, jejunet decem annos: et Episcopus duodecim annos; et semper lugeat, &c.—*Ib.*, p. 667.

Note 151.

I.

In hoc confessionis genere valde conduxerit ad peccati expiationem theologi alicujus auxilium, non minus quam in morbi curatione docti cujuspiam medici consilium.

II.

Sæpe peccant homines e propria ipsorum concupiscentia, nec raro per diaboli instigationem. Illud vero formadibile est, quod ecclesiastici toties in Deum peccantes, ordinis sui amittunt dignitatem.

III.

Ad hoc corrigendum, opus est rigida pœnitentia; semper tamen juxta modum ordinis et peccati, ut in canonibus est sancitum. Et debet quilibet hanc ambire totis suis viribus et conatu, intimi etiam cordis ipsius anxietate. Alii pœnitentiam subeant unius anni, alii plurium, sed pro modo semper delictorum. Alii mensis unius, alii plurium mensium, alii unius septimanæ, alii plurium septimanarum, alii unius diei, et alii plurium dierum, et alii quidem omnium dierum totius vitæ ipsorum.—*Ib.*, 670–1.

Note 152.

XIII.

Peccatorum apud Deum compositiones fiunt variis modis, et ad eorum solutionem plurimum conducunt eleemosynæ.

XIV.

Cui ad hoc facultas suppetat, ecclesias ædificet in laudem Dei; et

si præterea valeat, adjiciat prædia, et introducat juvenes qui pro ipso sacrum præstent servitium, et quotidie Deo celebrent mysteria. . . .—*Ib.*

Note 153.

Distribuat scilicet ob amorem Dei omnia quæ habet, deserat cum eisdem terras, patriam, et mundi hujus omnia desiderabilia, et Domino suo noctes diesque serviat, &c.—*Ib.*, p. 671–2.

Note 154.

Hic in sequentibus dicetur, quonam modo ægrotus quis posset indictum jejunium redimere.

XVIII.

Quisquis poterit unius diei jejunium unico denario redimere. Potest etiam unusquisque unius diei jejunium ducentis et viginti psalmis redimere. Potest etiam quisque duodecim mensium jejunium triginta solidis redimere: vel unum aliquem liberando tanti æstimatum: et pro unius diei jejunio decantet vir ille senis vicibus, *Beati*: et senis vicibus, *Pater noster*. Et pro unius diei jejunio genuflectat homo ille, et ad terram se inclinet sexaginta vicibus, dicens, *Pater noster*, &c.—*Ib.*, p. 672–3.

Note 155.

XIX.

Septenne jejunium potest quis in anno uno absolvere, si quotidie cantaverit psalterii psalmos, itidemque nocte, et quinquaginta vespere. Unica etiam Missa potest quis absolvere duodecim dierum jejunium: et cum triginta Missis potest quis eximere totius anni jejunium, si voluerit ex vero Dei amore pro seipso intercedere, et peccata sua suo confiteri confessario, eademque prout is edixerit emendare, et semper postea declinare.—*Ib.*

Note 156.

De Magnatum pœnitentia.

I.

Hoc modo potest vir illustris, et amicis fretus, amicorum ope leniorem reddere suam pœnitentiam. Primum in Dei nomine et confessarii sui testimonio, manifestet fidem suam rectam esse: et condonet omnibus qui in eum quid peccaverint, et faciat confessionem suam absque omni omissione peccatorum, polliceaturque resipiscentiam, et suscipiat pœnitentiam cum multo gemitu.

II.

Deponat tunc arma sua, &c. Paret se per triduum hunc in modum; sumatque sibi in auxilium duodecim socios: jejunent tres dies pane, et crudis oleribus, et aqua: et acquirat præterea quaque poterit, ad opus consummandum, septies centum viginti homines, qui jejunent singuli illius gratia totum triduum, tres videlicet quisque dies. Sic accrescet

horum jejuniorum numerus ad tot jejunia, quot sunt dies in toto septennio.

III.

Cum quis jejunaverit, distribuat fercula, seu eduliorum præparationes, quibus ipse frueretur, omnibus Dei pauperibus: et in tribus illis diebus sui jejunii seponat mundana quæcumque negotia; dieque et nocte quoties poterit, ecclesiam petat, et eleemosynario lumine ibidem vigilato solicite, et clamet ad Deum, peccatorumque exoret remissionem lugenti animo et genibus innixus. Sæpe etiam se extendat super signum crucis, nunc erectus, nunc in terram prostratus. Discat etiam vir quisque potens lacrymas ab oculis suis sincere fundere, et peccata sua deplorare. Pascat etiam in triduo illo tot egenos, quotquot prorsus valeat. Quarto autem die lavet omnes, ciboque donet et pecunia. Quin et ipse qui hanc agit pœnitentiam, pedum eorum incumbat lotioni: celebrenturque ea die pro eodem pœnitente tot missæ, quot ulla industria comparare quisquam poterit, et missarum earum tempore exhibeatur illi absolutio: et jam tum suscipiat eucharistiam, nisi quod ex nimio reatu suo adeo impeditus sit, ut hanc adhuc non accipiat. Spondeat tamen se in posterum Dei, quantum poterit, semper operaturum voluntatem; omnem injustitiam, auxiliante Deo, usque vixerit, declinaturum; ita ut perpetuo et præcipue Christianitatem recte teneat, et gentilismum omnino explodat.

IV.

Hæc est magnatum, et eorum qui amicorum fruuntur multitudine, sed non datur inopi sic procedere. Oportet igitur a seipso fortius hanc exigere: et illud quidem est æquissimum, ut unusquisque suas per se luat iniquitates, correctionemque subeat studiose. Scriptum est enim, *Quia unusquisque onus suum portabit.*—*Hard. Con. Gen.*, t. vi., *P.* 1, p. 673–4.

Note 157.

Canon XXI.

De confessione facienda, et non revelanda a sacerdote: et saltem in Pascha communicando.

Omnis utriusque sexus fidelis, postquam ad annos discretionis pervenerit, omnia sua solus peccata confiteatur fideliter, saltem semel in anno, proprio sacerdoti: et injunctam sibi pœnitentiam studeat pro viribus adimplere, suscipiens reverenter ad minus in pascha eucharistiæ sacramentum: nisi forte de consilio proprii sacerdotis, ob aliquam rationabilem causam ad tempus ab ejus perceptione duxerit abstinendum: alioquin et vivens ab ingressu ecclesiæ arceatur, et moriens Christiana careat sepultura. Unde hoc salutare statutum frequenter in Ecclesiis publicetur, ne quisquam ignorantiæ cæcitate velamen excusationis assumat. Si quis autem alieno sacerdoti voluerit justa de causa sua confiteri peccata, licentiam prius postulet et obtineat a proprio sacerdote, cum aliter ille ipse non possit solvere, vel ligare.—*Hard. Con.*, t. vii., p. 35.

Note 158.

Sacerdos autem sit discretus et cautus, ut more periti medici superinfundat vinum et oleum vulneribus saucìàti: diligenter inquirens et peccatoris circumstantias et peccati, per quas prudenter intelligat quale illi consilium debeat exhibere, et cujusmodi remedium adhibere, diversis experimentis utendo ad sanandum ægrotum.

Caveat autem omnino, ne verbo, vel signo, vel alio quovismodo prodat aliquatenus peccatorem: sed si prudentiori consilio indiguerit, illud absque ulla expressione personæ caute requirat: quoniam qui peccatum in pœnitentiali judicio sibi detectum præsumpserit revelare, non solum a sacerdotali officio deponendum decernimus: verum etiam ad agendam perpetuam pœnitentiam, in arctum monasterium detrudendum.—*Ib.*

Note 159.

Canon XXII.

Quod infirmi prius provideant animæ, quam corpori.

Cùm infirmitas corporalis nonnunquam ex peccato proveniat, ... decreto præsenti statuimus, et districtè præcipimus medicis corporum, ut cùm eos ad infirmos vocari contigerit, ipsos ante omnia moneant et inducant, quod medicos advocent animarum: ut postquam infirmis fuerit de spiritali salute provisum, ad corporalis medicinæ remedium salubrius procedatur, cum causa cessante cesset effectus.....

Si quis autem medicorum, hujus nostræ constitutionis, postquam per prælatos locorum fuerit publicata, transgressor exstiterit, tamdiu ab ingressu ecclesiæ arceatur, donec pro transgressione hujusmodi satisfecerit competenter.—*Ib.*

Note 160.

Intercessit olim controversia inter S. Thomam et quemdam doctorem de absolutionis forma: hoc asserente eam esse deprecatoriam: *Et quòd vix triginta anni essent, quòd omnes hac sola forma utebantur: Absolutionem et remissionem tribuat tibi Omnipotens Deus:* illo contra contendente formam absolutionis esse enuntiativam seu indicativam per hæc verba, *Ego te absolvo*, &c., quæ judiciariam Sacerdotis potestatem indicant.—*S. Greg. Mag.*, t. iii., p. 459, D, E.

Note 161.

Utrum pœnitentia sit sacramentum.

Videtur quod pœnitentia non sit sacramentum. Greg. enim dicit, et habetur in Decret. 1, q. 1. *Sacramenta sunt baptismus, chrisma, corpus et sanguis Christi: quæ ob id sacramenta dicuntur, quia sub tegumento corporalium rerum divina virtus secretius operatur salutem in eis.* Sed hoc non contingit in pœnitentia: quia non adhibentur aliquæ corporales res sub quibus divina virtus operetur salutem. Ergo pœnitentia non est sacramentum.

Sed contra est, quod sicut baptismus adhibetur ad purificandum a peccato, ita et pœnitentia. Unde et Petrus dixit Simoni, Act. 8. *Pœ-*

nitentiam age ab hac nequitia tua. Sed baptismus est sacramentum, ut supra habitum est. Ergo pari ratione et pœnitentia.—*S. Th. Aquin. Summa, P.* 3, *Q. LXXXIV., Art.* i.

Note 162.

Utrum hæc sit forma hujus sacramenti, Ego te absolvo.

Ad Tertium sic proceditur. Videtur, quod hæc non sit forma hujus sacramenti, *Ego te absolvo.* Formæ enim sacramentorum ex institutione Christi et Ecclesiæ usu habentur. Sed Christus non legitur hanc formam instituisse, neque etiam in communi usu habetur; quinimo in quibusdam absolutionibus, quæ in Ecclesia publice fiunt (sicut in Prima et completorio, et in cœna Domini), absolvens non utitur oratione indicativa, ut dicat, *Ego vos absolvo*, sed oratione deprecativa, cum dicit, *Misereatur vestri Omnipotens Deus*, vel *Absolutionem et remissionem tribuat vobis Omnipotens Deus.* Ergo hæc non est forma hujus sacramenti, *Ego te absolvo.*

Sed contra est, quod sicut Dominus dixit discipulis Matth. ultim. *Euntes docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos:* ita dixit Petro, Matth. 16. *Quodcunque solveris super terram.* Sed sacerdos auctoritate illorum verborum Christi fretus dicit, *Ego te baptizo.* Ergo eadem auctoritate dicere debet in hoc sacramento, *Ego te absolvo.*

Conclusio.

Nulla magis est conveniens sacramenti pœnitentiæ forma, quam hæc verba, *Ego te absolvo*, cum id aptissime significent quod in sacramento agitur.—*Ib., Art.* iii.

Note 163.

Græci in absolutione a peccatis utuntur multis formulis deprecatoriis, quas videre est in eorum Euchologio; cùm tamen priùs faciant mentionem potestatis absolvendi sibi divinitùs concessæ: "Tu, Domine, per sanctos Apostolos tuos donasti iis, qui in sancta Ecclesia successivè per tempora sacerdotali funguntur officio, facultatem in terris dimittendi peccata, ligandi atque solvendi omne vinculum injustitiæ, obsecramus itaque, pro Fratre nostro N. qui coram te adstat, tribue ei tuam misericordiam, disrumpens vinculum peccatorum."—*S. Greg. Mag.*, t. iii., p. 460, B.

Note 164.

Quod clerici non teneant publicè concubinas.

Addentes, ne clerici beneficiati, vel in sacris ordinibus constituti, in hospitiis suis tenere publice concubinas præsumant, nec alibi cum scandalo accessum habeant ad easdem.—*Hard. Concil.*, t. vii., p. 122.

Note 165.

Canon II.

De pœnis concubinariorum clericorum.

Si quis autem clericorum deinceps fuerit deprehensus incontinentiæ vitio laborare, detinendo publicè concubinam, nisi post admonitionem

canonicam illam a se prorsus expulerit, extunc tam beneficio quam et officio spolietur. Si vero nec sic fœtorem suæ libidinis curaverit evitare, quia crescente contumacia crescere debet et pœna, anathematis sententia feriatur.—*Ib.*

Note 166.

Canon V.

Clericos fructus præbendarum suarum concubinis et spuriis suis relinquere non posse.

Ad abolendam de domo Domini consuetudinem, vel potius corruptelam seu temeritatem, qua clerici (qui signum pudicitiæ debent ostendere laicis, quibus positi sunt in exemplum) in argumentum finalis suæ impœnitentiæ, fructus præbendarum suarum concubinis vel spuriis suis legant in ultima voluntate, contra eos rigor ecclesiasticus exerceri debet.—*Ib.*, t. vii., p. 138–9.

Note 167.

Circa confessionem hoc modo procedatur. Dicatur confitenti quod tria sunt præcipuè, quæ solent impedire homines veram facere confessionem: delectatio, et timor pœnitentiæ injungendæ, et pudor. . . . Auditis omnibus debet quærere ab eo, si plura redeunt ad memoriam. Si dicit quod sic: dicat ergo. Si dicit quod non: tunc debet sacerdos supplere defectum confitentis: juxta quod scriptum est, *Justus prior accusator est sui. Venit amicus ejus, et investigabit eum.* Justus, id est, confitens, primo debet accusare seipsum. Postea amicus ejus, id est, sacerdos, debet investigare peccata quæ omisit. . . .

A laicis generalifer quærendum est de decimis. . . . Si vero fuerit solutus, sive conjugatus: quærendum est de septem criminalibus peccatis. . . .

Circa mulieres, maximè de veneficiis et sortilegiis. Circa solutas quærendum est si velint vivere continenter, quousque conjugatas: alioquin non valet confessio. Et similiter quærendum est a conjugatis de peccatis carnis quæ commiserint ante matrimonium: et dicendum est de illis, quod secundum debitum naturæ debent propriis uti uxoribus, alioquin peccant in matrimonio. Circa lubricum carnis hoc modo breviter fiat inquisitio. . . .

Item quærendum est de numero personarum, et de vicibus, si habeantur in memoria. Item si cum viduis, quæ sunt ecclesiaticæ personæ. Si cum virginibus, si cum conjugatis, si cum monialibus. . . . Item si ad consanguineas vel affines, quæratur in quo gradu, in remoto vel propinquo. Si in puerperio, vel in menstruo sanguine, ubi est periculum propter prolem, quia ex corrupto semine nascitur corruptus fœtus. Item si cum muliere propinqua partui, quia tunc est periculum: posset enim partus interfici.

Item, si cum masculis, si cum jumentis. Et hæc pœnitentia injungatur: quia cum jumentis, præter alia quæ debent injungi, quod nunquam edant de carne illa. Et ut breviter concludam: A quocumque modo semen emittitur, non dormiendo, nisi cum propria uxore, et hoc fiat legitime secundum exigentiam naturæ, mortale peccatum est: et

secundum diversitates circumstantiarum, diversæ sunt injungendæ pœnitentiæ.—*Ib.*, p. 283–4.

Note 168.

Quæratur circa peccatum luxuriæ, utrum pœnitens ad prægnantes mulieres accesserit, seu viduas, vel alias: et quæratur numerus illarum cum quibus peccavit. Et si nescit numerum, saltem æstimatione dicat quod credit. Quæratur etiam quanto tempore in peccato permanserit, in quo loco, sacro vel non sacro.—*Ib.*, p. 480; *Concil. de Coprinaco. Can. XXXIV.*

Note 169.

Circa peccatum luxuriæ, quæratur .... de personis, utrum sacerdos, vel diaconus, vel subdiaconus, vel monachus. De tempore, utrum in solemnitatibus perpetuis.... Et si solutus laicus cum soluta concubuerit, tres annos pœnitentiæ debet secundum canonum rigorem, secunda feria, quarta et sexta, a cibis communibus jejunando abstinere. Si cum vidua, quatuor annos. Sed quia fragilitas nostri temporis tanti rigoris non patitur manere censivum, hujusmodi pœnam commutent vel temperent sacerdotes in orationibus vel eleemosynis, vel aliis satisfactionibus, prout eis visum fuerit expedire.—*Ib.*, t. vii., p. 596.

Note 170.

Præcipimus, ut sacerdotes parochialium ecclesiarum subditos suos frequenter admoneant, et etiam pœnitentiam injungant, ut ad confessionem sæpe veniant. Et priusquam veniant ad confessionem diligenter scrutentur corda sua, confiteri volentes, et peccata sua solicite rememorent: et cum dolore et vultu supplici ad confitendum accedant, quasi ad Dei judicium. Sacerdotes autem, ut Dei ministri, circa confessionem audiendam, et pœnitentiam injungendam, maximam adhibeant diligentiam, ut attente, diligenter, et cum modestia, audiant confitentem.

Item ad confessionem audiendam, communem et aptum locum in Ecclesia, ut ab omnibus videri possint, sibi eligant sacerdotes. In locis autem obscuris et tenebrosis confessiones non audiant, nec extra ecclesiam, nisi in magna necessitate vel infirmitate....

Item præcipimus, sub pœna excommunicationis, ut sacerdotes in audiendis confessionibus vultum humilem habeant, et oculos ad terram: nec faciem respiciant confitentis, et maxime mulierum....

Item sub pœna excommunicationis præcipimus, ne aliquis sacerdos audiat confessionem mulieris cum qua peccavit; nec etiam consocias aut fautores, aut mediatores peccati sui, sed mittat eos vel eas ad honestos et discretos confessores.

.... est sacer ordo, sacer locus circa peccatum luxuriæ et concupiscentiæ, quæ omnia notantur in hoc versu:

Quis, quid, ubi, cum quo, quoties, cur, quomodo, quando.

.... Item nullus sacerdos in ira, odio, vel etiam metu corporis, confessionem confitentis audeat revelare verbo vel signo, generaliter vel specialiter, dicendo: Ego scio te talem qualis es. Et si revelaverit ali-

quo modo, de hoc convictus, debet absque omni misericordia degradari. Si tamen indigeat consilio, illud (ut dictum est) sine expressione personæ cautè requirat.

. . . . Si quis autem proprio sacerdoti parochiali ad minus semel in anno plene et integre confessus non fuerit, præcipimus quod sacerdos in Pascha ei sacramentum minimè administret.

Item sacerdotes diligenter attendant, qui parochiani eorum, saltem in anno semel ad confessionem non veniant; et nomina illorum ad nos vel ad Officialem nostrum, seu ad Ordinarium loci referant, ut debitè puniantur; ne ab ipsis sacerdotibus notam negligentiæ requiramus.—*Ib.*, t. vii., p. 826–7–8.

Note 171.

Summula, seu modus exigendi confessiones, pœnitentiasque injungendi, ab eodem R. P. Petro episcopo Exoniensi, sacerdotibus suæ diœcesis ad observandum impositus in Synodo Exoniensi.

. . . . Hæc ergo ego Petrus Exoniensis intimè considerans, et insufficentiæ presbyterorum sacrorum confessiones audientium compatiens, quorum ignorantiam, proh dolor! sæpissimè sum expertus, præsentem summulam eisdem assigno, ut eam sciant ad utilitatem suam et confitentium.

. . . . Contra spiritus peccata, injungenda sunt maximè oratio, humilitas, mansuetudo, et similia. Contra gulam et luxuriam, et cupiditatem, et avaritiam, injungenda sunt flagella corporis, jejunia, disciplinæ et peregrinationes.—*Ib.*, p. 1124–7.

Note 172.

Cap. XIII.

Ut singuli ter in anno confiteantur et communicent: alioqui suspecti de hæresi habeantur.

Omnes autem utriusque sexus, postquam ad annos discretionis advenerint, confessionem peccatorum faciant per ter in anno proprio sacerdoti, vel alii de voluntate ipsius, vel mandato, injunctam pœnitentiam et humiliter et pro viribus impleturi: et ter in anno, in Natali Domini, Pascha, et Pentecoste, sacramentum Eucharistiæ cum omni reverentia suscepturi: ita quod confessio communionem præcedat: nisi forte, ob aliquam causam rationabilem, ad tempus ab ejus participatione abstinuerint, de consilio proprii sacerdotis. Soliciti sint itaque presbyteri circa ista: ut ex nominum inspectione cognoscant, sicut superius est expressum, utrum sint aliqui qui communicare subterfugiant. Nam si quis a communione, nisi de consilio proprii sacerdotis, abstinuerit, suspectus de hæresi habeatur.

XIV.

Ne laïci habeant libros Scripturæ, præter psalterium, et divinum officium: at eos libros ne habeant in vulgari lingua.

Prohibemus etiam, ne libros veteris testamenti, aut novi, laïci permittantur habere: nisi forte psalterium, vel breviarium pro divinis officiis, aut horas beatæ Mariæ, aliquis ex devotione habere velit. Sed

ne præmissos libros habeant in vulgari translatos, arctissime inhibemus.—*Ib.*, p. 178.

Note 173.

Sessio XIV., Cap. III., A.D. 1551.

Docet præterea sancta synodus, sacramenti Pœnitentiæ formam, in qua præcipue ipsius vis sita est, in illis ministri verbis positam esse, *Ego te absolvo*, &c. Quibus quidem de ecclesiæ sanctæ more preces quædam laudabiliter adjunguntur: ad ipsius tamen formæ essentiam nequaquam spectant, neque ad ipsius sacramenti administrationem sunt necessariæ. Sunt autem quasi materia hujus sacramenti, ipsius pœnitentis actus, nempe contritio, confessio, et satisfactio; qui, quatenus in pœnitente ad integritatem sacramenti, ad plenam et perfectam peccatorum remissionem ex Dei institutione requiruntur, hac ratione partes pœnitentiæ dicuntur. Sane vero res et effectus hujus sacramenti, quantum ad ejus vim et efficaciam pertinet, reconciliatio est cum Deo, &c.—*Ib.*, t. x., p. 91.

Note 174.

Cap. IV.

De Contritione.

....Etsi contritionem hanc aliquando caritate perfectam esse contingat, hominemque Deo reconciliare, priusquam hoc sacramentum actu suscipiatur; ipsam nihilominus reconciliationem ipsi contritioni sine sacramenti voto, quod in illa concluditur, non esse adscribendam. Illam vero contritionem imperfectam, quæ attritio dicitur, quoniam vel ex turpitudinis peccati consideratione, vel ex gehennæ, et pœnarum metu communiter concipitur, si voluntatem peccandi excludat, cum spe veniæ, declarat non solum non facere hominem hypocritam, et magis peccatorem, verum etiam donum Dei esse, et Spiritus Sancti impulsum, non adhuc quidem inhabitantis, sed tantum moventis, quo pœnitens adjutus viam sibi ad justitiam parat. Et quamvis sine sacramento Pœnitentiæ per se ad justificationem perducere peccatorem nequeat, tamen eum ad Dei gratiam in sacramento Pœnitentiæ impetrandam disponit, &c.—*Ib.*, p. 91–2.

Note 175.

Cap. V.

De Confessione.

Ex institutione sacramenti Pœnitentiæ jam explicata, universa ecclesia semper intellexit, institutam etiam a Domino integram peccatorum confessionem, et omnibus post baptismum lapsis jure divino necessariam exsistere: quia Dominus noster Jesus Christus, e terris ascensurus ad cælos, sacerdotes sui ipsius vicarios reliquit, tamquam præsides et judices, ad quos omnia mortalia crimina deferantur, in quæ Christi fideles ceciderint; quo pro potestate clavium remissionis aut retentionis peccatorum sententiam pronuntient. Constat enim sacer-

dotes judicium hoc incognita causa exercere non potuisse; neque æquitatem quidem illos in pœnis injungendis servare potuisse, si in genere dumtaxat, et non potius in specie ac sigillatim sua ipsi peccata declarassent. Ex his colligitur, oportere a pœnitentibus omnia peccata mortalia, quorum, post diligentem sui discussionem, conscientiam habent, in confessione recenseri; etiam occultissima illa sint, et tantum adversus duo ultima decalogi præcepta commissa; quæ nonnunquam animum gravius sauciant, et periculosiora sunt iis quæ in manifesto admittuntur, &c.—*Ib.*, p. 92.

Note 176.

In iis probandis, hanc rationem habeant Episcopi, ut pii, bene morati, docti, prudentes, patientes, de animarum salute soliciti, et fideles custodes sint eorum quæ in confessione dicuntur; provecta etiam ætate, præsertim illi, quibus confessiones mulierum erunt audiendæ.

Sacerdotes, nisi ex causa necessaria, mulieres ante solis ortum, vel post ejus occasum, confitentes ne audiant. Neve in cellis, sed publice in Ecclesia, in sedibus, in quibus tabella omnino inter confitentem et confessorem interjecta sit. Hujusmodi autem sedes in ecclesiis ab iis, ad quos pertinent, constituendas episcopi quamprimum curabunt.—*Ib.*, p. 653.

Note 177.

Nec sine causa necessaria in privatis ædibus cujusquam maris vel feminæ confessionem audiant.—*Ib.*

Note 178.

Confessores canones pœnitentiales bene noverint; et de pœnitentia, quam cuique peccato præscripserunt, confitentes admoneant: ut tanto diligentius a peccatis cavere studeant, quanto in pœnitentiis canonum mitigandis benigniorem in se ecclesiam experiuntur.—*Ib.*, p. 655.

Note 179.

Iidem, quemadmodum a sancta Tridentina synodo jussum est, publice peccantibus publicam pœnitentiam imponant: neque illud publicæ pœnitentiæ genus, nisi data ab episcopo facultate, secreta alia pœna commutare audeant.—*Ib.*

Note 180.

Il est ordonné aux clercs de se confesser à l'évêque deux fois l'année: savoir, au commencement du carême, et depuis la mi-Août jusqu'au premier jour de Novembre. Sauf à se confesser dans les autres tems, toutes les fois qu'ils voudront, soit à l'évêque, soit à un prêtre député de sa part. Celui qui aura celé quelque péché en se confessant à l'évêque, ou cherchera à se confesser à d'autres; si l'évêque le peut découvrir, il le punira de fouet ou de prison. C'EST LA PREMIÈRE FOIS QUE JE TROUVE LA CONFESSION COMMANDÉE.—*Fleury*, *Histoire Ecclesiastique*, t. ix., p. 390, ed. of 1758.

Note 181.

Comme divers accidens nous empêchent d'observer pleinement les canons touchant la réconciliation des pénitens: chaque prêtre aussi-tôt qu'il aura reçu leur confession, aura soin de les reconcilier par la prière. C'est à dire, qu'il n'attendra pas que la pénitence soit accomplie.—*Ib.*, p. 359.

Note 182.

L'usage de la pénitence suivant les anciens canons est aboli en la plûpart des lieux; c'est pourquoi il faut implorer le secours de l'empereur, afin que les pêcheurs publics fassent pénitence publique, et soient excommuniés et réconciliés selon les canons. Quelques-uns ne se confessent pas entièrement; c'est pourquoi il faut les avertir de se confesser des péchés de pensée, comme des péchés extérieurs. Il ne faut pas seulement se confesser à Dieu, mais aux prêtres.—*Ib.*

Note 183.

On doit imposer la pénitence selon l'écriture et la coutume de l'église, et bannir absolument les livres que l'on nomme pénitentiels, dont les erreurs sont certaines, et les auteurs incertains, et qui flattent les pécheurs, en imposant pour de grands péchés des pénitences legères et inusitées. . . .—*Ib.*

Note 184.

Le concile de Châlons continue: Il y a beaucoup d'abus dans les pélerinages qui se font à Rome, à Tours et ailleurs. Des prêtres et des clercs prétendent par-là se purifier de leurs péchés, et devoir être rétablis dans leur fonctions. des laïques s'imaginent acquérir l'impunité pour leurs péchés passés ou à venir: les puissans en tirent un prétexte d'exaction sur les pauvres, les pauvres un titre de mendicité. —*Hist. Ecc. de Fleury*, t. x., p. 134–6.

Note 185.

Plusieurs prêtres, dit le concile, soit par négligence, soit par ignorance, imposent aux pécheurs des pénitences autres que les canons ne prescrivent, se servant de certains petits livres qu'ils nomment pénitentiels; c'est pourquoi nous avons tous ordonné que chaque évêque dans son diocèse recherche soigneusement ces livres erronés, pour les mettre au feu; afin que les prêtres ignorans ne s'en servent plus pour tromper les hommes. Et ces prêtres seront exactement instruits par leurs évêques, de la discrétion avec laquelle ils doivent interroger ceux qui se confessent, et de la mesure de pénitence qu'ils doivent leur imposer; car jusqu'ici, par leur faute, plusieurs crimes sont demeurés impunis, au grand péril des ames. On recommande en particuliers de rejetter ces nouveaux pénitentiels, qui trompoient les pécheurs par de vaines espérances, et de s'en tenir à la sevérité des anciens canons, touchant les impuretés abominables, qui n'étoient alors que trop communes.—*Ib.*, p. 272–3.

Note 186.

Nous voyons dans les lettres du Pape Nicolas trois autres exemples de ces pénitences canoniques, semblable à celles des premiers siècles; mais ce qui paroit étrange, c'est qu'il imposoit des pénitences par menace, à des pêcheurs qui n'en demandoient point. Car Etienne, Comte d'Auvergne, ayant chassé de son siége Sigon, évêque de Clermont, et mis un usurpateur à sa place, le pape lui ordonne de le retablir incessamment, ... Autrement, dit le pape, nous vous défendons l'usage du vin et de la chair, jusques à ce que vous veniez à Rome vous présenter devant nous.—*Ib.*, t. xi., p. 161.

Note 187.

Par exemple, celui qui ne peut jeûner, pour un jour de jeûne au pain et à l'eau, chantera cinquante pseaumes à genoux dans l'église, et nourrira un pauvre ce jour-là; moyennant quoi il prendra telle nourriture qu'il plaira, excepté le vin, la chair, et la graisse. Cent genuflexions tiendront lieu de cinquante pseaumes; et les riches pourront se racheter pour de l'argent.—*Ib.*, t. xii., p. 413.

Note 188.

C'est la première fois que je trouve cette défense, mais nous pouvons l'expliquer favorablement, en disant que les esprits étoient tellement aigris, qu'on ne pouvoit arrêter les contestations, qu'en ôtant les livres saints, dont les heretiques abusoient.—*Ib.*, t. xvi., p. 633.

Note 189.

Les pénitences canoniques étoient encore en vigueur à la fin de l'onziéme siécle.... Mais on s'était imaginé, je ne sçai sur quel fondement, que chaque péché de même espéce méritait sa pénitence: que si un homicide, par exemple, devait être expié par une pénitence de dix ans, il falloit cent ans pour dix homicides, ce qui rendait les pénitences impossibles, et les canons ridicules.—*Ib.*, t. xiii., *Discours Preliminaire*, p. xxxiv.

Note 190.

Depuis que l'on eut rendu les pénitences impossibles, à force de les multiplier, il fallut venir à des compensations et des estimations, telles qu'on les voit dans le decret de Burchard, et dans les écrits de Pierre Damien. C'était des pseaumes, des génuflexions, des coups de disciplines, des aumônes, des pelerinages: toutes actions que l'on peut faire sans se convertir.... Les pénitences acquittées par autrui le faisaient beaucoup moins; et les disciplines qu'un saint moine se donnoit pour un pécheur, n'étaient pas pour ce pécheur des pénitences médicinales. Car le péché n'est pas comme une dette pécuniaire, que tout autre peut payer à la décharge du débiteur et en quelque monnoie que ce soit; c'est une maladie qu'il faut guérir en la personne du malade.—*Ib.*, p. xxxv.

Note 191.

Un autre abus furent les pénitences forcées. J'en trouve en Espagne dès le septiéme siécle. Ensuite les évêques voyant plusieurs pécheurs qui ne venaient point se soumettre à la pénitence, s'en plaignirent dans les parlemens, et prierent les princes de les y contraindre par leur puissance temporelle. C'était bien ignorer la nature de la pénitence, qui consiste dans le repentir, et dans la conversion du cœur, c'était mettre le pécheur, qui pour prévenir la justice divine, se punit volontairement lui-même, au rang du criminel, que la justice humaine punit malgré lui.—*Ib.*, p. xxxvi.

Note 192.

Le plus grand mal, c'est qu'il voulait soutenir les peines spirituelles par les temporelles, qui n'étaient pas de sa compétence. D'autres l'avaient déja tenté, j'ai marqué que les évêques imploraient le secours du bras seculier, pour forcer les pécheurs à pénitence; et que les papes avaient commencé plus de deux cens ans auparavant à vouloir régler par autorité les droits des couronnes. Gregoire VII. suivit ces nouvelles maximes, et les poussa encore plus loin; prétendant ouvertement, que comme pape, il était en droit de déposer les souverains rebelles à l'église. Il fonda cette prétention principalement sur l'excommunication.—*Ib.*, p. xli.

Note 193.

Voyons maintenant les conséquences de ces principes. Il se trouve un prince indigne et chargé de crimes, comme Henri IV., roi d'Allemagne.... Il est cité à Rome, pour rendre compte de sa conduite, il ne comparoît point. Après plusieurs citations le pape l'excommunie: il méprise la censure. Le pape le déclare déchu de la royauté, absout ses sujets du serment de fidelité, leur défend de lui obéir, leur permet, ou même leur ordonne d'élire un autre roi. Qu'en arrivera-t-il? Des seditions et des guerres civiles dans l'état, des schismes dans l'église. —*Ib.*, p. xlii.

Note 194.

Revenons donc aux maximes de la sage antiquité. Un souverain peut être excommunié comme un particulier, je le veux, mais.... les effets n'en seraient que spirituels.... On n'a jamais prétendu, au moins dans les siécles de l'église les plus éclairés, qu'un particulier excommunié perdit la propriété de ses biens ou de ses esclaves, ou la puissance paternelle sur ses enfans. Jesus Christ, en etablissant son évangile, n'a rien fait par force, mais tout par persuasion, suivant la remarque de S. Augustin. Il a dit que son royaume n'était pas de ce monde, et n'a pas voulu se donner seulement l'autorité d'arbitre entre deux freres.... Ses apôtres et leurs successeurs ont suivi le même plan. ... Ce n'est qu'après plus de mille ans qu'on s'est avisé de former un nouveau système, et d'ériger le chef de l'église en monarque souverain, même quant au temporel, &c.—*Ib.*, p. xliii.–iv.

Note 195.

Gregoire VII. se laissa encore entraîner à la prévention déja reçue, que Dieu devait faire éclater sa justice en cette vie. De-là vient que dans ses lettres il promet à ceux qui seront fidéles à Saint Pierre, la prospérité temporelle, en attendant la vie éternelle, et menace les rebelles de la perte de l'une et de l'autre.... Mais Dieu ne fait pas des miracles au gré des hommes, et il semble qu'il voulut confondre la temerité de cette prophétie.... Loin de corriger le roi Henri, il ne fait que lui donner occasion de commettre de nouveaux crimes: il excite des guerres cruelles qui mettent en feu l'Allemagne et l'Italie: il attire un schisme dans l'église, on l'assiége lui-même dans Rome, il est obligé d'en sortir et d'aller enfin mourir en exil à Salerne.—*Ib.*, p. xliv.–v.

Note 196.

De toutes les suites des Croisades, la plus importante à la religion a été la cessation des pénitences canoniques. Je dis la cessation, et non pas l'abrogation: car elles n'ont jamais été abolies expressément par constitution d'aucun pape, ni d'aucun concile:.... Je n'ai rien vu de semblable dans toute la suite de l'histoire. Les pénitences canoniques sont tombées insensiblement par la faiblesse des évêques, et la dureté des pécheurs, par négligence, par ignorance: mais elles ont reçu le coup mortel, pour ainsi dire, par l'indulgence de la croisade. —T. xviii., *Discours Preliminaire*, p. xxxi., § 11.

Note 197.

Je sçais que ce n'était pas l'intention du Pape Urbain et du concile de Clermont. Ils croyaient, au contraire, faire deux biens à la fois: délivrer les lieux saints, et faciliter la pénitence à une infinité de pécheurs, qui ne l'auraient jamais faite autrement.... Mais il est à craindre qu'on n'eût pas assez considéré les solides raisons des anciens canons qui avaient réglé le tems et les exercices de la pénitence. Les saints qui les avaient etablis, n'avaient pas seulement en vue de punir les pécheurs, ils cherchaient principalement à s'assurer de leur conversion, et voulaient encore les précautionner contre les rechutes. On commençait donc par les séparer du reste des fidéles, et on les tenait enfermés pendant tout le tems de leur pénitence, excepté lorsqu'ils devaient assister dans l'église aux prières communes et aux instructions. Ainsi on éloignait les occasions de péché; et le recueillement de cette retraite donnait aux pénitens le loisir et la commodité de faire de sérieuses réflexions sur l'énormité du péché, la rigueur de la justice de Dieu, les peines éternelles, et les autre vérités terribles, que les prêtres qui prenaient soin d'eux, ne manquaient pas de leur représenter, pour exciter en eux l'esprit de componction. Ensuite on les consolait, on les encourageait, et on les affermissait peu à peu dans la résolution de renoncer pour toujours au péché, et mener une vie nouvelle.—*Ib.*, p. xxxii.

Note 198.

Ce ne fut que dans le huitiéme siécle que l'on introduisit les pélerinages, pour tenir lieu de satisfaction; et ils commencerent à ruiner la pénitence par les distractions et les occasions de rechutes. Encore ces pélerinages particuliers étaient-ils bien moins dangereux que les croisades.—*Ib.*, p. xxxiii.

Note 199.

C'était, pour ainsi dire, des pécheurs tout crûs, qui sans conversion de cœur, et sans préparation précédente, sinon peut-être une confession telle quelle, allaient pour l'expiation de leurs péchés s'exposer aux occasions les plus dangereuses d'en commettre de nouveaux: des hommes choisis entre ceux de la vertu la plus éprouvée auraient eu peine à se conserver en de tels voyages. Il est vraie que quelques-uns s'y préparaient serieusement à la mort, en payant leur dettes, restituant le bien mal acquis, et satisfaisant à tous ceux à qui ils avaient fait quelque tort; mais il faut avouer aussi que la croisade servait de prétexte aux gens oberés pour ne point payer leur dettes, aux malfaicteurs pour éviter la punition de leur crimes, aux moines indociles pour quitter leur cloîtres, aux femmes perdues pour continuer plus librement leurs désordres: car il s'en trouvait à la suite de ces armées, et quelques-unes déguisées en hommes.—*Ib.*, p. xxxiii, xxxiv.

Note 200.

Les croisés qui s'établirent en Orient après la conquête, loin de se convertir, s'y corrompirent de plus en plus.—*Ib.*

Note 201.

Enfin Jerusalem et la terre sainte sont retombées au pouvoir des infideles, et les croisades ont cessé depuis quatre cens ans; mais les pénitences canoniques ne sont point revenues. Tant que les croisades durerent, elles tinrent lieu de pénitence; non seulement à ceux qui se croisaient volontairement, mais à tous les grands pécheurs, à qui les évêques ne donnaient l'absolution qu'à la charge de faire en personne le service de la terre sainte pendant un certain tems, ou d'y entretenir un nombre d'hommes armés. Il semblait donc qu'après la fin des croisades on dût revenir aux anciennes pénitences; mais l'usage en était interrompu depuis deux cens ans au moins, et les pénitences étaient devenues arbitraires. Les évêques n'entraient plus gueres dans le détails de l'administration des sacramens: les freres mendians en étaient les ministres les plus ordinaires, et ces missionnaires passagers ne pouvaient suivre pendant un long tems la conduite d'un pénitent, pour examiner le progrès et la solidité de sa conversion, comme faisaient autrefois les propres pasteurs: ces religieux étaient obligés d'expedier promptement les pécheurs pour passer à d'autres.—*Ib.*, p. xxxiv., xxxv.

Note 202.

D'ailleurs on traitait la morale dans les écoles comme le reste de la

théologie, par raisonnement plus que par autorité, et problematiquement, mettant tout en question, jusques aux vérités les plus claires: d'ou sont venues avec le tems tant de décisions des casuistes, éloignées non-seulement de la pureté de l'evangile, mais de la droite raison. Car où ne va-t-on point en ces matieres, quand on se donne toute liberté de raisonner? Or les casuistes se sont plus appliqués à faire connaître les péchés, qu'à en montrer les remedes. Ils se sont principalement occupés à décider ce qui est péché mortel, et à distinguer à quelle vertu est contraire chaque péché; si c'est la justice, la prudence, ou la temperance: ils se sont étudiés à mettre, pour ainsi dire, les péchés au rabais, et a justifier plusieurs actions, que les anciens, moins subtiles mais plus sinceres, jugeaient criminelles.—*Ib.*, p. xxxv., xxxvi.

Note 203.

Sachez donc que leur objet n'est pas de corrompre les mœurs: ce n'est pas leur dessein. Mais ils n'ont pas aussi pour unique but celui de les reformer: ce seroit une mauvaise politique. Voici quelle est leur pensée. Ils ont assez bonne opinion d'eux-mêmes, pour croire qu'il est utile et comme necessaire au bien de la Religion, que leur crédit s'étende partout, et qu'ils gouvernent toutes les consciences. Et parce que les maximes Evangeliques et severes sont propres pour gouverner quelques sortes de personnes, ils s'en servent dans ces occasions où elles leur sont favorables. Mais comme ces mêmes maximes ne s'accordent pas au dessein de la plupart des gens, ils les laissent à l'égard de ceux-là, afin d'avoir de quoi satisfaire tout le monde. C'est pour cette raison qu'aiant affaire à des personnes de toutes sortes de conditions et de nations si différentes, il est necessaire qu'ils aient des Casuistes assortis à toute cette diversité.—*Lettres Provinciales, ed. Amsterdam, A.D.* 1735*; Lettre 5*, t. i., p. 203.

Note 204.

De ce principe vous jugez aisément que s'ils n'avoient que des Casuistes relâchez, ils ruineroient leur principal dessein, qui est d'embrasser tout le monde, puis que ceux qui sont veritablement pieux, cherchent une conduite plus severe. Mais comme il n'y en a pas beaucoup de cette sort, ils n'ont pas besoin de beaucoup de directeurs severes pour les conduire. Ils en ont peu pour peu; au lieu que la foule des Casuistes relâchez s'offre à la foule de ceux qui cherchent le relâchement.—*Ib.*, p. 204.

Note 205.

C'est par cette conduite *obligeante et accommodante*, comme l'appelle le P. Petau, qu'ils tendent les bras à tout le monde.... Par là ils conservent tous leurs amis, et se defendent contre tous leurs ennemis. —*Ib.*, t. i., p. 204.

Note 206.

Une action ne peut être imputée à peché, si Dieu ne nous donne, avant de la commettre, la connoissance du mal qui y est, et une inspiration qui

nous excite à l'éviter.—*Ib.*, *Quatrieme Lettre de la Grace actuelle*, t. i., p. 156.

Note 207.

Une action ne peut être imputée à blâme lors qu'elle est involontaire. Afin qu'une action soit volontaire, il faut qu'elle procede d'homme qui voit, qui sache, qui pénétre ce qu'il y a de bien et de mal en elle.—*Ib.*, p. 168.

Note 208.

Une opinion est appelée probable, lorsqu'elle est fondée sur des raisons de quelque considération. D'où il arrive quelquefois, qu'un seul Docteur fort grave peut rendre une opinion probable. Car un homme adonné particulierement à l'étude, ne s'attacheroit pas à une opinion, s'il n'y étoit attiré par une raison bonne et suffisante.

. . . . Et la restriction qu'y aportent certains auteurs ne me plaît pas, que l'autorité d'un tel Docteur est suffisante dans les choses de droit humain, mais non pas dans celles de droit divin. Car elle est de grand poids dans les unes et dans les autres.

The Jesuits Sanchez, Angelus, Sylvius, Navarre, Emmanuel Sa, &c., *quoted by Pascal, Lettre 5, De la Probabilité*, t. i., p. 211–12.

Note 209.

Cela n'en est que mieux. Ils ne s'accordent au contraire presque jamais. Il y a peu de questions, où vous ne trouviez que l'un dit, oui; l'autre dit, non. Et en tous ces cas-là, l'une et l'autre des opinions contraires est probable.—*Ib.*, p. 213.

Note 210.

Un Docteur étant consulté, peut donner un conseil, non seulement probable selon son opinion; mais contraire à son opinion, s'il est estimé probable par d'autres, lors que cet avis contraire au sien, se rencontre plus favorable, et plus agréable à celui qui le consulte. Mais je dis de plus, qu'il ne sera point hors de raison, qu'il donne à ceux qui le consultent, un avis tenu pour probable par quelque personne savante, quand même il s'assureroit qu'il seroit absolument faux.

The Jesuits Laiman, Vasquez, Sanchez, &c., *quoted by Pascal, ib.*, p. 214.

Note 211.

Quand le pénitent, dit le P. Bauni entr'autres, *suit une opinion probable, le Confesseur le doit absoudre, quoique son opinion soit contraire à celle du pénitent. . . . Refuser l'absolution à un pénitent qui agit selon une opinion probable, est un peché qui de sa nature est mortel.*

The Jesuit Doctors Bauni, Suarez, Vasquez, and Sanchez, quoted by Pascal, ib., p. 215–16.

Note 212.

Dans les questions de Morale, les nouveaux Casuistes sont préferables aux anciens Peres, quoiqu'ils fussent plus proches des Apôtres.

The Jesuits Cellot and Reginald, quoted by Pascal, ib., p. 216.

Note 213.

Par exemple, le Pape Gregoire XIV. a declaré que les assassins sont indignes de jouir de l'azyle des Eglises, et qu'on les en doit arracher. Cependant nos 24 Viellards disent *que tous ceux qui tuent en trahison, ne doivent pas encourir la peine de cette Bulle.* Cela vous paroît être contraire, mais on l'accorde, en interpretant le mot d'*assassin*, comme ils font par ces paroles : *Les assassins ne sont ils pas indignes de jouir du privilege des Eglises? Oui par la Bulle de Gregoire XIV. Mais nous entendons par le mot d'assassins, ceux qui ont reçu de l'argent pour tuer quelq'un en trahison. D'où il arrive que ceux qui tuent sans en recevoir aucun prix, mais seulement pour obliger leurs amis, ne sont pas appellez assassins.* De même il est dit dans l'Evangile : *Donnez l'aumône de vôtre superflu.* Cependant plusieurs Casuistes ont trouvé moien de décharger les personnes les plus riches de l'obligation de donner l'aumône. Cela vous paroît encore contraire ; mais on en fait voir facilement l'accord, en interpretant le mot de *superflu*, en sorte qu'il arrive presque jamais que personne en ait. Et c'est ce qu'a fait le docte Vasquez en cette sorte dans son traité de l'Aumône, c. 4. *Ce que les personnes du monde gardent pour relever leur condition et celles de leurs parens, n'est pas appellé superflu. Et c'est pourquoi à peine trouvera-t-on qu'il y ait jamais de superflu dans les gens du monde, et non pas même dans les rois.*

Aussi Diana aiant rapporté ces mêmes paroles de Vasquez ; car il se fonde ordinairement sur nos Peres, il en conclut fort bien, *Que dans la question : Si les riches sont obligez de donner l'aumône de leur superflu : encore que l'affirmative fût veritable, il n'arrivera jamais, ou presque jamais, qu'elle oblige dans la pratique.* — *Pascal, Let. Prov., Sixieme Lettre*, t. ii., p. 2–3.

Note 214.

Quand le tems a meuri une opinion, alors elle est tout-à-fait probable et sûre. Et de là vient que le docte Caramouel dans la Lettre où il addresse à Diana sa Théologie fondamentale, dit que ce grand Diana *a rendu plusieurs opinions probables qui ne l'étoient pas auparavant : et qu'ainsi on ne pêche plus en les suivant, au lieu qu'on péchoit auparavant.*—*Ib.*, p. 8.

Note 215.

Helas ! me dit le Pere, notre principal but auroit été de n'établir point d'autres maximes que celles de l'Evangile dans toute leur severité. Et l'on voit assez par le reglement de nos mœurs, qui si nous souffrons quelque relâchement dans les autres, c'est plutôt par condescendance que par dessein. Nous y sommes forcez. Les hommes sont

aujourd'hui tellement corrompus, que ne pouvant les faire venir à nous, il faut bien que nous allions à eux. Autrement il nous quitteroient; ils feroient pis, ils s'abandonneroient entierement. Et c'est pour les retenir que nos Casuistes ont considéré les vices auxquels on est le plus porté dans toutes les conditions, afin d'établir des maximes si douces, sans toutefois blesser la verité, qu'on seroit de difficile composition si l'on n'en étoit content. Car le dessein capital que notre Société a pris pour le bien de la Religion, est de ne rebuter qui que ce soit, pour ne pas désesperer le monde.

Nous avons donc des maximes pour toutes sortes de personnes, pour les beneficiers, pour les Prêtres, pour les Religieux, pour les Gentilshommes, pour les domestiques, pour les riches, pour ceux qui sont dans le commerce, pour ceux qui sont mal dans leurs affaires, pour ceux qui sont dans l'indigence, pour les femmes devotes, pour celles qui ne le sont pas, pour les gens mariez, pour les gens dereglez. Enfin rien n'a échappé à leur prévoiance.—*Ib.*, t. ii., p. 8–9.

Note 216.

Commençons par les beneficiers. Vous savez quel trafic on fait aujourd'hui des benefices, et que s'il fallait s'en rapporter à ce que S. Thomas et les anciens en ont écrit, il y auroit bien des Simoniaques dans l'Eglise. C'est pourquoi il a été fort necessaire, que nos Peres aient temperé les choses par leur prudence, comme ces paroles de Valentia vous l'apprendront.... *Si l'on donne un bien temporel pour un bien spirituel:* c'est a dire de l'argent pour un benefice: *et qu'on donne l'argent comme le prix du benefice, c'est une simonie visible. Mais si on le donne comme le motif qui porte la volonté du Collateur à le conferer; ce n'est point simonie, encore que celui qui le confere, considere et attende l'argent comme la fin principale....* Par ce moien nous empêchons une infinité de simonies. Car qui seroit assez méchant pour refuser, en donnant de l'argent pour un benefice, de porter son intention à le donner comme *un motif* qui porte le benefice à le resigner, au lieu de le donner comme *le prix* du benefice? Personne n'est assez abandonné de Dieu pour cela.—*Ib.*, p. 9–10.

Note 217.

Quant aux Prêtres, nous avons plusieurs maximes qui leur sont assez favorables. Par exemple,... le Pere Bauni.... resout ainsi cette question: *Un prêtre peut il dire la Messe le même jour qu'il a commis un peché mortel et des plus criminels, en se confessant auparavant? Non, dit Villalobos, à cause de son impureté: mais Sancius dit que Oui, et sans aucun péché, et je tiens son opinion sûre, et qu'elle doit être suivie dans la pratique.*—*Ib.*, p. 12.

Note 218.

Vous avez raison, mais c'est que vous ne savez pas encore cette belle maxime de nos Peres: *Que les lois de l'Eglise perdent leur force, quand on ne les observe plus;.... Filiutius*, &c. Nous voions mieux que les anciens les nécessitez presentes de l'Eglise.—*Ib.*, t. ii., p. 13.

Note 219.

Mais en voilà assez pour les Prêtres .... venons aux Religieux. Comme leur plus grande difficulté est en l'obéissance qu'ils doivent a leurs Superieurs, écoutez l'adoucissement qu'y apportent nos Peres. . . . *Il est hors de dispute, que le Religieux qui a pour soi une opinion probable, n'est point tenu d'obéir à son Superieur, quoique l'opinion du Superieur soit la plus probable. Car alors il est permis au Religieux d'embrasser celle qui lui est la plus agréable.*—*Ib.*, p. 13–14; *Castrus Paläus and others.*

Note 220.

Touchant les valets. Nous avons consideré à leur égard la peine qu'ils ont, quand ils sont gens de conscience, à servir des maîtres débauchez. Car s'ils ne font tous les messages où ils les emploient, ils perdent leur fortune, et s'ils leur obéissent, ils en ont du scrupule. C'est pour les en soulager que nos 24 Peres ont marqué les services qu'ils peuvent rendre en sûreté de conscience. En voici quelques uns: *Porter des lettres et des présens, ouvrir les portes et les fenêtres; aider leur maître à monter à la fenêtre, tenir l'échelle pendant qu'il y monte; tout cela est permis et indifferent. Il est vraie que pour l'échelle il faut qu'ils soient menacez plus qu'à l'ordinaire, s'ils y manquoient. Car c'est faire injure au maître d'une maison d'y entrer par la fenêtre.*—*Ib.*, p. 15.

Note 221.

Mais notre Pere Bauni a encore bien appris aux valets à rendre tous ces devoirs-là innocemment à leurs maîtres, en faisant qu'ils portent leur intention, non pas aux pechez dont ils sont entremetteurs, mais seulement au gain qui leur en revient.... *Que les confesseurs*, dit il, *remarquent bien, qu'on ne peut absoudre les valets qui font des messages deshonnêtes, s'ils consentent aux péchez de leurs maîtres; mais il faut dire le contraire, s'ils le font pour leur commodité temporelle.*—*Ib.*, p. 15–16.

Note 222.

Le même P. Bauni a encore établi cette grande maxime en faveur de ceux qui ne sont pas contens de leur gages. *Les valets qui se plaignent de leurs gages, peuvent-ils d'eux-mêmes les croître en se garnissant les mains d'autant de bien appartenant à leurs maîtres, comme ils s'imaginent en être nécessaire pour egaler lesdits gages à leur peine? Ils le peuvent en quelques rencontres, comme lorsqu'ils sont si pauvres en cherchant condition, qu'ils ont été obligez d'accepter l'offre qu'on leur a faite, et que les autres valets de leur sorte gagnent davantage ailleurs.* —*Ib.*, t. ii., p. 15–16.

Note 223.

Sachez donc que ce principe merveilleux est notre grande methode *de diriger l'intention* dont l'importance est telle dans notre morale,

que j'oserois quasi la comparer à la doctrine de la Probabilité.... Mais je veux maintenant vous faire voir cette grande methode dans tout son lustre sur le sujet de l'homicide, qu'elle justifie en mille rencontres; afin que vous jugiez par un tel effet tout ce qu'elle est capable de produire.... Nous ne souffrons jamais d'avoir l'intention formelle de pécher, pour le seul dessein de pecher; et que quiconque s'obstine à n'avoir point d'autre fin dans le mal que le mal même, nous rompons avec lui; cela est diabolique: voilà qui est sans exception d'âge, de sexe, de qualité. Mais quand on n'est pas dans cette malheureuse disposition, alors nous essaions de mettre en pratique notre methode de *diriger l'intention*, qui consiste à se proposer pour fin de ses actions un objet permis. Ce n'est pas qu'autant qu'il est en notre pouvoir, nous ne détournions les hommes des choses défendues; mais quand nous ne pouvons pas empêcher l'action, nous purifions au moins l'intention; et ainsi nous corrigeons le vice du moien, par la pureté de la fin.—*Ib.*, p. 85–6, *Lettre VII., De l'Homicide.*

Note 224.

Pour vous faire voir l'alliance que nos Peres ont faite des maximes de l'Evangile, avec celles du monde, par cette direction d'intention, écoutez notre Pere Reginaldus: *Il est défendu aux particuliers de se vanger. Car Saint Paul dit, Ne rendez à personne le mal pour le mal. ... Outre tout ce qui est dit dans l'Evangile, du pardon des offenses, comme dans les chapitres* 6 *et* 18 *de Saint Mathieu.... De toutes ces choses il paroît qu'un homme de guerre peut sur l'heure même poursuivre celui qui l'a blessé; non pas à la verité avec l'intention de rendre le mal pour le mal, mais avec celle de conserver son honneur.*—*Ib.*, p. 87.

Note 225.

Voiez-vous comment ils ont soin de défendre d'avoir l'intention de rendre le mal pour le mal, parceque l'Ecriture le condamne? Ils ne l'ont jamais souffert. Voiez Lessius, De just., *Celui qui a reçu un soufflet, ne peut pas avoir l'intention de s'en vanger: mais il peut bien avoir celle d'éviter l'infamie, et pour cela de repousser à l'instant cette injure, et même a coups d'épée;* Etiam cum gladio. Nous sommes si éloignez de souffrir qu'on ait le dessein de se vanger de ses ennemis, que nos Peres ne veulent pas seulement, que l'on souhaite la mort par un mouvement de haine. Voiez notre Pere Escobar: *Si votre ennemi est disposé à vous nuire, vous ne devez pas souhaiter sa mort par un mouvement de haine, mais vous le pouvez bien faire pour éviter votre dommage.*—*Ib.*, p. 88.

Note 226.

Ecoutez encore ce passage de notre Pere Gaspar Hurtado, cité par Diana. *Un beneficier peut sans aucun peché mortel desirer la mort de celui qui a une pension sur son benefice; et un fils celle de son Père, et se réjouir quand elle arrive, pourvû que ce ne soit que pour le bien qui lui en revient, et non pas par une haine personelle.*—*Ib.*, p. 89.

Note 227.

Si un gentil-homme qui est appellé en duel, est connu pour n'être pas devot, et que les pechez qu'on lui voit commèttre à toute heure sans scrupule, fassent aisément juger, que s'il refuse le duel ce n'est pas par la crainte de Dieu, mais par timidité, et qu'ainsi on dise de lui que c'est une poule, et non pas un homme; il peut pour conserver son honneur, se trouver au lieu assigné, non pas veritablement avec l'intention expresse de se battre en duel, mais seulement avec celle de se défendre, si celui qui l'a appellé, l'y vient attaquer injustement. Et son action sera toute indifferente d'elle-même. Car quel mal y a-t-il d'aller dans un champ, de s'y promener en attendant un homme, et de se défendre si on l'y vient attaquer? Et ainsi il ne péche en aucune manière, puisque ce n'est point du tout accepter un duel, aiant l'intention dirigée à d'autres circonstances. Car l'acceptation du duel consiste en l'intention expresse de se battre, laquelle celui-ci n'a pas.—*Ib.*, p. 89.

Note 228.

Enfin Sanchez .... permet non seulement de recevoir, mais encore d'offrir le duel, en dirigeant bien son intention. *Il est bien raisonnable de dire, qu'un homme peut se battre en duel pour sauver sa vie, son honneur, ou son bien en une quantité considerable, lorsque il est constant qu'on les lui veut ravir injustement par des procès et des chicaneries, et qu'il n'y a que ce seul moyen de les conserver. Et Navarre dit fort bien, qu'en cette occasion il est permis d'accepter et d'offrir le duel:* Licet acceptare, et offerre duellum. *Et aussi qu'on peut tuer en cachette son ennemi. Et même en ces rencontres là on ne doit point user de la voie du duel, si on peut tuer en cachette son homme, et sortir par-là d'affaire. Car par ce moien on évitera tout ensemble, et d'exposer sa vie dans un combat, et de participer au peché que notre ennemi commettroit par un duel.*—*Ib.*, t. ii., p. 91.

Note 229.

Selon notre Pere Baldelle, rapporté par Escobar, *Il est permis de tuer celui qui vous dit: Vous avez menti, si on ne peut le reprimer autrement.* Et on peut tuer de la même sorte pour des médisances, selon nos Peres. Car Lessius, que le Pere Hereau entr'autres suit mot à mot, dit: *Si vous tâchez de ruiner ma reputation par des calomnies devant les personnes d'honneur, et que je ne puisse l'éviter autrement qu'en vous tuant, le puis-je faire? Oui, selon des Auteurs modernes, et même encore que le crime que vous publiez soit veritable, si toutefois il est secret, en sorte que vous ne puissiez le découvrir selon les voies de la justice. Et en voici la preuve. Si vous me voulez ravir l'honneur en me donnant un soufflet, je puis l'empêcher par la force des armes; donc la même défense est permise, quand vous me voulez faire la même injure avec la langue. De plus on peut empêcher les affronts; donc on peut empêcher les médisances. Enfin l'honneur est plus cher que la vie. Or on peut tuer pour défendre sa vie; donc on peut tuer pour défendre son honneur.*—*Ib.*, p. 95–6.

Note 230.

Mais comme nos Peres sont fort circonspects, ils ont trouvé à propos de défendre de mettre cette doctrine en usage, en ces petites occasions. Car ils disent au moins, *Qu'à peine doit-on la pratiquer.* Et ce n'a pas été sans raison ; la voici. Je le sais bien, lui dis-je ; c'est parceque la loi de Dieu défend de tuer. Ils ne le prennent pas par là, me dit le Pere : ils le trouvent permis en conscience, et en ne regardant que la verité en elle-même. Et pourquoi le défendent ils donc ? Ecoutez le, dit il : C'est parce qu'on dépeupleroit un Etat moins de rien, si on en tuoit tous les médisans. Aprenez-le de notre Reginaldus : *Encore que cette opinion qu'on peut tuer pour une médisance, ne soit pas sans Probabilité dans la theorie, il faut suivre le contraire dans la pratique. Car il faut toujours éviter le dommage de l'Etat dans la maniere de se defendre. Or il est visible qu'en tuant le monde de cette sorte, il se feroit un grand nombre de meurtres.* Lessius en parle de même. *Il faut prendre garde que l'usage de cette maxime ne soit nuisible à l'Etat. Car alors il ne faut pas le permettre.*—*Ib.*, t. ii., p. 96–7.

Note 231.

Tannerus dit : *Qu'il est permis aux Ecclesiastiques, et aux Religieux mêmes, de tuer pour défendre non seulement leur vie, mais aussi leur bien, ou celui de leur Communauté.* Molina, Becan, Reginaldus, Layman, Lessius, et les autres se servent tous des mêmes paroles. Et même selon notre celebre P. l'Amy, il est permis aux Prêtres et aux Religieux de prévenir ceux qui les veulent noircir par des médisances, en les tuant pour les en empêcher. Mais c'est toujours en dirigeant bien l'intention. Voici ses termes. *Il est permis à un Ecclesiastique, à un Religieux, de tuer un calomniateur qui ménace de publier des crimes scandaleux de sa Communauté, ou de lui-même, quand il n'y a que ce seul moien de l'en empêcher, comme s'il est prêt à répandre ses médisances, si on ne le tue promtement. Car en ce cas, comme il seroit permis à ce Religieux de tuer celui qui lui voudroit ôter la vie ; il lui est permis aussi de tuer celui qui lui veut ôter l'honneur, ou celui de sa Communauté, de la même sorte qu'aux gens du monde.*—*Ib.*, p. 99–100.

Note 232.

Je veux maintenant vous parler des facilitez que nous avons aportées pour faire éviter les pechés dans les conversations et dans les intrigues du monde. Une chose des plus embarassantes qui s'y trouve, est d'éviter le mensonge ; et sur tout quand on voudrait bien faire accroire une chose fausse. C'est à quoi sert admirablement notre doctrine des équivoques, par laquelle *il est permis d'user de termes ambigus, en les faisant entendre en un autre sens, qu'on ne les entend soi-même*, comme dit Sanchez. . . . Nous l'avons tant publié qu'à la fin tout le monde en est instruit. Mais savez vous bien comment il faut faire quand on ne trouve point de mots equivoques ? Non, mon Pere. Je m'en doutois bien, dit-il : cela est nouveau : c'est la doctrine des res-

trictions mentales. Sanchez la donne au même lieu : *On peut jurer*, dit il, *qu'on n'a pas fait une chose, quoi qu'on l'ait fait effectivement, entendant en soi-même, qu'on ne l'a pas faite un certain jour, ou avant qu'on fût né, ou en sous-entendant quelqu'autre circonstance pareille, sans que les paroles dont on se sert, aient aucun sens qui le puisse faire connoitre. Et cela est fort commode en beaucoup de rencontres, et est toujours très-juste quand cela est nécessaire ou utile pour la santé, l'honneur, ou le bien.—Ib., Lettre IX.*; t. ii., p. 179–80.

Note 233.

Comment, mon Pere, et n'est-ce pas là un mensonge, et même un parjure ? Non, dit le Pere ; Sanchez le prouve au même lieu, et notre P. Filiutius aussi, parce, dit-il, que c'est *l'intention qui regle la qualité de l'action.* Et il y donne encore un autre moien plus sûr d'éviter le mensonge. C'est qu'après avoir dit tout haut, *Je jure que je n'ai point fait cela*, on ajoute tout bas, *aujourd'hui :* ou qu'après avoir dit tout haut, *Je jure*, on dise tout bas, *que je dis*, et que l'on continue ensuite tout haut, *que je n'ai point fait cela.* Vous voiez bien que c'est dire la verité. Je l'avoue, lui dis-je ; mais nous trouverions peut-être que c'est dire la verité tout bas, et un mensonge tout haut : outre que je craindrois que bien des gens n'eussent pas assez de presence d'esprit pour se servir de ces methodes. Nos Peres, dit-il, ont enseigné au même lieu en faveur de ceux qui ne sçauroient pas user de ces restrictions, qu'il leur suffit pour ne point mentir, de dire simplement *qu'ils n'ont point fait* ce qu'ils ont fait, pourvû *qu'ils aient en general l'intention de donner à leurs discours le sens qu'un habile homme y donneroit.—Ib.*

Note 234.

Dites la verité : il vous est arrivé bien des fois d'être embarassé manque de cette connaissance ? Quelquefois, lui dis-je. Et n'avouerez vous pas de même, continua-t-il, qu'il seroit souvent bien commode d'être dispensé en conscience de tenir de certaines paroles qu'on donne ? Ce seroit, lui dis-je, la plus grande commodité du monde. Ecoutez donc Escobar, ou il donne cette regle generale : *Les promesses n'obligent point, quand on n'a point intention de s'obliger en les faisant. Or il n'arrive guere qu'on ait cette intention, à moins que l'on les confirme par serment, ou par contract ; de sorte que quand on dit simplement, je le ferai, on entend qu'on le fera si l'on ne change de volonté. Car on ne veut pas se priver par-là de sa liberté.* Il dit à la fin, *que tout cela est pris de Molina, et de nos autres auteurs :* et ainsi on n'en peut douter.—*Ib.*, p. 181.

Note 235.

Ce n'est qu'un peché veniel de calomnier et d'imposer des faux crimes, pour ruiner de creance ceux qui parlent mal de nous. . . . *Il est constant*, dit Caramouel, *que c'est une opinion probable, qu'il n'y a point de peché mortel à calomnier faussement pour conserver son honneur. Car elle est soutenue par plus de vingt Docteurs graves, par*

Gaspar Hurtado, et Dicastillus, Jesuites, &c., de sorte que si cette doctrine n'étoit probable, à peine y en auroit-il aucune qui le fût en toute la Théologie.—Lettre XV., t. iii., p. 183–4.

Note 236.

Le prêtre est obligé de croire son pénitent sur sa parole . . . . il n'est pas nécessaire que le Confesseur se persuade que la resolution de son pénitent s'executera, ni qu'il le juge même probablement : mais il suffit qu'il pense qu'il en a à l'heure même le dessein en general, quoi qu'il doive retomber en bien peu de tems. Et c'est ce qu'enseignent tous nos auteurs. —Suarez and Filiutius, quoted by Pascal, Lettre X., t. ii., p. 219.

Note 237.

Le P. Petau parle de l'*ancienne Eglise.* Mais cela est maintenant si *peu de saison*, pour user des termes de nos Peres, que selon le P. Bauni le contraire est seul veritable. *Il y a des auteurs qui disent qu'on doit refuser l'absolution à ceux qui retombent souvent dans les mêmes pechez, et principalement lors qu'après les avoir plusieurs fois absous, il n'en paroît aucun amandement et d'autres disent que non. Mais la seule veritable opinion est, qu'il ne faut point leur refuser l'absolution : et encore qu'ils ne profitent point de tous les avis qu'on leur a souvent donnez, qu'ils n'aient pas gardé les promesses qu'ils ont faites de changer de vie, qu'ils n'aient pas travaillé à se purifier, il n'importe ; et quoi qu'en disent les autres, la veritable opinion, et laquelle on doit suivre, est que même en tous ces cas on les doit absoudre.* Et tr. 4, q. 22, p. 100. *Qu'on ne doit ni refuser, ni differer l'absolution à ceux qui sont dans des pechez d'habitude contre la loi de Dieu, de nature, et de l'Eglise, quoi qu'on n'y voie aucune esperance d'amandement.—Ib.*, p. 219–20.

Note 238.

Ecoutez le P. Bauni : *On peut absoudre celui qui avoue que l'esperance d'être absous l'a porté à pecher avec plus de facilité, qu'il n'eut fait sans cette esperance.* Et le P. Caussin défendant cette proposition, dit *que si elle n'etoit veritable, l'usage de la Confession seroit interdit à la plûpart du monde ; et qu'il n'y auroit plus d'autre remede aux pecheurs qu'une branche d'arbre et une corde.—Ib.*, p. 220.

Note 239.

Nos Peres Fagundez, Granados et Escobar, dans la pratique selon notre Societé, ont décidé, *que la contrition n'est pas nécessaire même à la mort : parce*, disent ils, *que si l'attrition avec le Sacrement ne suffisoit pas à la mort, il s'ensuivroit, que l'attrition ne seroit pas suffisante avec le Sacrement.—Ib.*, p. 225–6.

Note 240.

La contrition est si peu nécessaire au sacrement, qu'elle y seroit au contraire nuisible, en ce qu'effaçant les pechez par elle-même, elle ne laisseroit rien à faire au sacrement. C'est ce que dit notre Pere Va-

lentia, ce celebre Jesuite, . . . *La contrition n'est point du tout nécessaire pour obtenir l'effet principal du Sacrement, mais au contraire elle y est plutôt un obstacle : Imò obstat potius quominùs effectus sequatur.* —*Ib.*, p. 227.

Note 241.

Notre Pere Antoine Sirmond . . . . dans son admirable livre de la Défense de la vertu, . . . conclut enfin, qu'on n'est obligé à autre chose à la rigueur qu'à observer les autres commandemens, sans aucune affection pour Dieu, et sans que notre cœur soit à lui, pourvû qu'on ne le haïsse pas. C'est ce qu'il prouve en tout son second traité . . . . où il dit ces mots : *Dieu en nous commandant de l'aimer, se contente que nous lui obéissions en ses autres commandemens. Si Dieu eût dit : Je vous perdrai, quelque obéissance que vous me rendiez, si de plus votre cœur n'est à moi, ce motif à votre avis eût-il été bien proportionné à la fin que Dieu a dû et a pû avoir ? Il est donc dit, que nous aimerons Dieu en faisant sa volonté, comme si nous l'aimions d'affection ; comme si le motif de la charité nous y portoit. Si cela arrive réellement, encore mieux : si non, nous ne laisserons pas pourtant d'obéir en rigueur au commandement d'amour, en aiant les œuvres, de façon que (voiez la bonté de Dieu) il ne nous est pas tant commandé de l'aimer, que de ne le point haïr.*—*Ib.*, p. 228–9.

Note 242.

C'est ainsi que nos Peres ont déchargé les hommes de l'obligation *penible* d'aimer Dieu actuellement. Et cette doctrine est si avantageuse, que nos Peres Annat, Pintereau, Le Moine, et A. Sirmond même, l'ont défendue vigoureusement, quand on a voulu la combattre. Vous n'avez qu'à le voir dans leurs réponses à la Theologie morale, et celle du Pere Pintereau . . . . vous fera juger de la valeur de cette dispense, par le prix qu'il dit qu'elle a coûté, qui est le sang de Jesus-Christ. C'est le couronnement de cette doctrine. Vous y verrez donc que cette dispense de l'obligation *fâcheuse* d'aimer Dieu, est le privilege de la loi Evangelique, par dessus la Judaïque.—*Ib.*, p. 229–30.

Note 243.

Quid est Sacramentum ?

Propriè est ceremonia in Evangelio instituta, cui est addita promissio Evangelii.

Quot sunt ?

Tria rectè numerantur, Baptismus, Absolutio, Cœna Domini.—*Catechesis puerilis, Philip. Melancth. opp.*, t. i., p. 25, ed. A.D. 1562.

Note 244.

De Confessione.

Confessio in Ecclesiis apud nos non est abolita. Non enim solet porrigi corpus Domini, nisi antea exploratis et absolutis. . . . Ornatur

potestas clavium, et commemoratur, quantam consolationem afferat perterrefactis conscientiis, et quod requirat Deus fidem, ut illi absolutioni tanquam voci de cœlo sonanti credamus, et quod illa fides in Christum vere consequatur, et accipiat remissionem peccatorum. . . . . —*Ib.*, p. 33.

Note 245.

Sed de confessione docent, quod enumeratio delictorum non sit necessaria, nec sint onerandæ conscientiæ cura enumerandi omnia delicta, quia impossibile est omnia delicta recitare, ut testatur Psal., *Delicta quis intelligit?* Item Jeremias, *Pravum est cor hominis et inscrutabile.* Quod si nulla peccata nisi recitata remitterentur, nunquam acquiescere conscientiæ possent, quia plurima peccata neque vident neque meminisse possunt. Testantur et veteres scriptores enumerationem non esse necessariam. Nam in Decretis citatur Chrysostomus, qui sic ait, Non tibi dico ut te prodas in publicum, neque apud alios te accuses, sed obedire te volo prophetæ dicenti, Revela ante Deum viam tuam. Ergo tua confitere peccata apud Deum, verum judicem, cum oratione. Delicta tua pronuncia non lingua, sed conscientiæ tuæ memoria, &c. Et glossa in Decretis de Pœnitentia (*Dist.* 5), fatetur humani juris esse confessionem. Verum confessio, cùm propter maximum absolutionis beneficium, tùm propter alias conscientiarum utilitates apud nos retinetur.—*Confessio Fidei exhibita Invictiss. Imp. Carolo V. Aug., Philip. Melancth. opp.*, t. i., p. 34.

Note 246.

Ideoque docent nostri retinendam esse in Ecclesiis privatam Absolutionem, et ejus dignitatem, et potestatem clavium veris et amplissimis laudibus ornant, quòd videlicet potestas clavium administret Evangelium non solum in genere omnibus, sed etiam privatim singulis, &c. —*Iidem Articuli copiosius et explicatius declarati Wormatiæ*, &c., *Philip. Melancth. opp.*, t. i., p. 49.

Note 247.

De Pœnitentia.

. . . . . Sunt autem partes pœnitentiæ duæ, Contritio et Fides.—*Ib.*, p. 25.

Note 248.

De Satisfactione.

Consuetudo satisfactionum improbanda est, et rejicienda doctrina de satisfactionibus. Cavendum est enim omni studio, ne obruatur doctrina de gratuita acceptatione et de fide. Luceat hæc sententia in Ecclesiis, quod gratis propter Christum donetur remissio culpæ et pœnæ æternæ, quod Christus sit satisfactio et victima pro peccatis nostris, quod nulla nostra opera sint satisfactiones pro peccatis nostris. —*Catechesis puerilis, Philip. Melancth. opp.*, t. i., p. 26–7.

Note 249.

Deus perdat istos impios Sophistas, tam scelestè detorquentes verbum Dei ad sua somnia vanissima. Quis bonus vir non commoveatur indignitate tanta? Christus inquit: Agite pœnitentiam. Apostoli prædicant pœnitentiam. Igitur pœnæ æternæ compensantur satisfactionibus nostris! Igitur claves habent mandatum remittendi partem pœnarum purgatorii! Igitur satisfactiones redimunt pœnas purgatorii! Quis docuit istos asinos hanc Dialecticam?—*Apologia Confessionis, Philip. Melancth. opp.*, t. i., p. 91.

THE END.

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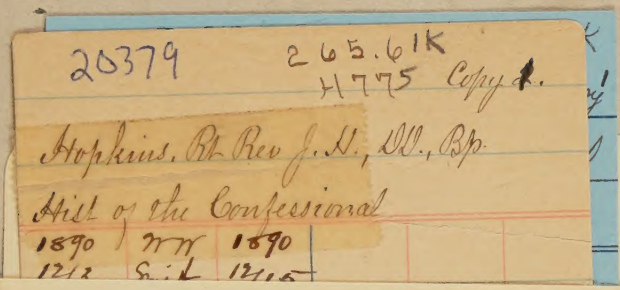

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